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JAPAN
THE EASTERN WONDERLAND

22

UNIFORM WITH THIS WORK.

RUSSIA: THE LAND OF THE
GREAT WHITE CZAR.

By E. C. PHILLIPS. With 48 Full-
page Illustrations.

CASELL AND COMPANY, LIMITED;
London, Paris, New York & Melbourne.



GEISHA AND DANCING GIRL.

*Photo : S. Kajima,
Sutherland Avenue, N.W.*

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JAPAN

THE EASTERN
WONDERLAND

BY

D. C. ANGUS

ILLUSTRATED

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INTRODUCTION.



WHEN I was in London some years ago, studying English Law at University College, a kind professor and his wife took me in, and made me so literally "one of the family" that their children too adopted me and gave me all the privileges (?) of an elder brother. The children were much given to talking about "Alice in Wonderland," and one day I rashly said, "I don't believe your Alice saw things a bit more wonderful than you would see if I could take you to *my* country. *That* is a wonderland if you like!" Then, of course, they began to ask how and why, and to set some startling incident of Alice's life before me, and ask if I could match that! And then I used to bring out the oddest things I knew (odd, I mean, to English people), and sometimes succeeded in beating

Alice. But I had little time for story-telling ; and as the day of my return drew near, and the children said one morning, " You haven't told us half the things you promised, what you did when you were a little boy, and heaps of things," I thought, No, that is true, and I should wish these children, who seem like my own relations, to know something of my life—our Japanese life—before we opened our gates to foreigners. When I get home, I will write a little sketch of it for them. Then, too, it will help to keep me in their memories, and kindly thoughts will travel to and fro across the ocean between them and me.

So I said aloud, " Well, you may expect a book of pictures, with as many particulars as I can crowd into a little space, about—

" THE EASTERN WONDERLAND."

Then they said, " But there must be a little girl in it ; there always is a little

girl in 'Wonderlands.'” But I didn't see how that could be done, unless I borrowed Alice from Mr. Carroll, who is not likely to wish to part with her.

But I have thought all the time, in writing my little book, of Nelly, the youngest, and the dearest little tease that ever was, and it has seemed to me that I was showing her one thing after another, so strange to her, so familiar to me. So, Nelly, my looking-glass is for you, and you are my Alice.

This little book gives some idea of what Japan was like *in the past*: as will be seen from the last chapter a great change has come over the country, and even since these lines were written the changes have been going on and increasing every day. You must understand, therefore, that I am introducing to you, not the modern Japan, but the Japan of former days. You will, I think, find it a veritable “Eastern Wonderland.”

YOUR JAPANESE BROTHER.

JAPAN :

THE EASTERN WONDERLAND.



CHAPTER I.

MY SISTER AND I.

I WAS born in 2510—counting, that is, from the date of our first emperor, or, as you would say, in A.D. 1850.

My father was a rice-farmer near Kanagaga, on the sea-coast. We thought ourselves happy in living there, for we were but sixteen miles from our great and wonderful city, Yedo, to the north; and when we turned to the south-west, we saw the most beautiful mountain ever human eyes beheld, Fuji.

Clothed with forest, and crowned with glittering snow, beautiful as a dream is Fuji in its lonely grandeur. Not

we Japanese only, but foreigners who come from seeing many wonders of beauty, think that Fuji is what our poets have called it, "The Matchless Mountain." And we, who have lived in its presence from childhood, feel as if it were some venerable yet dear and familiar friend; and, when absent, we long for a sight of it, just as the Swiss pine for their dearly loved mountain peaks.

I had one sister, Hana, or "Blossom," a little older than I. My name was Kotarō, or "little eldest son."

I have said *my name*, but perhaps you never guessed, little Nelly, that your big brother has had four already; and might have at least one more, if he were not a Christian—baptised into one name—by one name which I shall never part with, whatever other people may choose to call me.

But this is how it was, and how it is still among most of us.

When I was thirty days old I was



WOMEN IN THE RICE FIELDS.

*Photo: S. Kajima,
Sudborough Avenue, N.W.*

taken to the nearest Buddhist temple. My father wrote three names on separate slips of paper, and gave them to the priest, who, after asking the gods to direct the lot, threw the slips up in the air, and the first that fell to earth was supposed to contain the name which the gods approved. So I became Kotarō, and so I shall go on calling myself here, lest I should quite confuse your little head.

At fifteen, Japanese boys are of age, and then we often take another name. If we serve the Government in any office, we have another; in short, whenever we become of more importance in the world, it is common to assume a new name.

Lastly, after death, our relations give us a name, that *we* have never heard, and it is that, added to the surname, by which we are known to those that come after.

With the help of a man and woman,

my parents worked hard to keep our little house and farm in order. Many a long hour my mother stooped over the rice-field, carrying me in the folds of her loose robe, with my little hands about her neck. Even if I fell asleep, I was sheltered and safe. If she left me at home, I could scarcely come to harm, for our floors are covered with soft clean mats of equal size, over which still softer and finer ones are laid, with quilts stuffed with cotton for beds and sofas. No high chairs, no grates and chimney-pieces, no poker, fender, and tongs, no heavy tables; nothing for babies to climb up to, and tumble down from, to hit against, and knock over. Even the walls of our rooms are only paper, set in a light wooden framework, which we can slide in and out, along grooves in the floor, like screens. A Japanese baby, you see, has little temptation to cry and scream in houses so happily devised for its use.



"GOZÉ," OR ITINERANT MUSICIAN

THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

And the consequence is (one of your European travellers, M. Humbert, says it quite seriously) that Japanese babies seldom or never do cry, and that they grow up amiable and gentle, because they have been so gently dealt with in their infant days. But there are other causes for the good temper and gentleness which are certainly usual among us.

The Japanese are very fond of children: they are child-like themselves in many ways, and docile and obedient to "superiors"; and they teach their children, as they were taught, with excessive indulgence and gentleness, but with great care and painstaking. Hana and I were taught our first lessons in pretty behaviour before we could stand alone. We had games, which our parents played with us, in which we learnt many things, scarcely knowing that we were doing anything but play. We were taught obedience first of all, and were

treated so gently that we grew up never wishing to disobey.

I went to school, and learnt, as all Japanese do—even the very poorest—to read and write and do accounts. Hana learned all this, and, besides, she was taught to sew, to make and pour out tea gracefully, to keep house generally, to receive visitors, and to play on the *samisen*, or harp, to arrange flowers, and to decorate rooms with them. I learned to draw, and both of us were carefully taught how to use our fans!

There is something, Nelly, which we in Japan have been accustomed to place almost first in importance for children to learn and imitate, and grown-up people to observe—that is, etiquette. What is etiquette? Well, with us it means the rules for polite and proper behaviour in all circumstances. They date from ancient times, when the Government dictated to the people through a special department for the



DANCING.

T. E. 100

purpose. These rules are laid down for every condition of life, and the great object of a Japanese is to follow them, so as to act with dignity and grace in every situation, never to be embarrassed, never ignorant, and never wanting in respect to himself or to others.

The art of using the fan is a case in point. Women very often prefer the flat fans, and men utilise the folding ones. Every one uses a fan of some kind, and being so constantly in our hands, we come to use them to express fifty things, just as some people wave their hands and raise their eyebrows, in preference to speaking.

So you see it was of the greatest importance that we should know how to use this dumb language. There is a fan-holder in every ordinary house, and if you happened to call on us unprovided with a fan, we should immediately offer one to you, and while you talked you

would accompany all you said with appropriate swayings of it.

We sometimes read in class, at the top of our voices, the "Iroha," the forty-eight alphabets of the Japanese language (named Iroha after the initial sound), derived from a verse with this meaning—

"Colour and odour alike pass away ;
In our world nothing is permanent
The present day has disappeared in the profound abyss
of nothingness ;
It was but the pale image of a dream, it causes us not
the least regret."

After which gloomy sentiments we rushed out into the street, and played at leap-frog, as frolicsome and happy a set of little creatures as you could well see.

Sometimes we were enchanted by the wonderful tricks of the jugglers who travel about in a "show" with bears and monkeys ; sometimes a puppet-show came round ; and sometimes a man with a movable stall set up his little stove, and made griddle-cakes for us, and,



Photo : Karl Lewis, Yokohama.

STREET MUSICIANS, YOKOHAMA.

while we watched him, often a story-teller stopped, and began a thrilling tale in a loud voice, and when he had got a crowd of us round him—with men and women, too, sometimes—he would suddenly leave off at the most exciting part, and refuse to go on till the cash came in. “Cash” is the Chinese name we use for small money, many times less in value than your farthings—coins made of bronze, with a hole in the middle, which the shopkeeper slips on to strings or skewers. Then we ran and begged some cash of our mothers, and, thus provided, implored the cruel old man to tell us what came next.

Sometimes there came a wandering woman-minstrel, who sang to her harp the ballads and legends of old times. Then Hana and I rushed out to listen, and drank in the tales of gods and evil spirits, brave warriors and heroines, cunning foxes, and still more dangerous badgers, who could change themselves

into the shapes of men and women, and lead people astray, like your "will-o'-the-wisp," till they were lost in the rice-swamps, or in the forests, or on the mist-covered hills.

Often, too, the tales and songs were of true persons and things; and it is, indeed, very much to the minstrel and the story-teller that we owe the traditions of past greatness and goodness, which have kept up so strong a feeling of patriotism among us.

I dare say you know "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," that fine song which makes every Scotsman doubly Scottish when he hears it? Well, we hear many such, sung to us by the wandering harpist in the streets of the city and on the country road, sung by our mothers as they soothe us to sleep, and by our fathers and their friends as they sow and plough in the fields.

In winter, when Hana and I could not play in the streets after dark—and

you must know, Nelly, in our country, where the summer is really hot, people of all classes are much more out of doors than in—we gathered round the little charcoal fire in its metal pan. It gave but little heat, I confess, but we tried to make up for it by crowding all together under a wadded quilt or blanket, which we drew up to our shoulders as we sat round the little fire, drinking hot tea. Then our parents told us endless stories, and taught us to play chess and games of cards; also “instructive” games, to teach us poetry and proverbs, history and geography; and puzzles, in which the loser, if a boy, had his face inked, and if a girl, had a wisp of straw stuck in her black hair. Then we had chequers, backgammon—oh, more puzzles than I can tell of now.

Then, too, we had as playmates our little pug dog, very short and fat, and our good-natured cat, whose fur was white and marked with black and

yellow stripes, and who had no tail to speak of.

In a glass case, gold and silver fish (three-tailed) darted about. And—this was our greatest treasure—in a bamboo cage, like a dolls' house, we kept a beautiful butterfly in summer, whose wings from end to end measured five inches as it fluttered over its bed of flowers. Or in winter a chirping grasshopper made music for us.

After the day's work was over, our parents' friends often dropped in to see them; and then tea was made and handed round in little cups, without milk or sugar, sponge cakes and half peeled oranges were offered, and pipes were smoked by all but the children, who sat up and listened quietly, and understood a good deal of what was said.

"What, weren't you sent to bed at seven or eight, like English children?" I think I hear you exclaim. Not at all; we sat up with our elders, for they

always liked us to be with them, and enjoying what they did as far as we could. I suppose you think, Nelly, it is no wonder Japanese children are good—they are spoiled; get everything they want, in fact! I am afraid you are right.

Sometimes my sister was allowed to give a party. She was just as much a child as you, Nelly, in her heart; but our ways are so different, that I dare say you would have been afraid of her. and thought her quite a grown-up young lady, if you had seen her receiving her visitors. My mother painted her lips crimson, and her cheeks red, powdered and whitened the rest of her face, and did up her hair stiffly, drawing it back and tying it tightly behind, and then frizzing it out into a great chignon, which was fastened with long gilt or silver pins, and ornamented with flowers. She wore two robes, generally different shades of the same colour. If the

outer one was of scarlet silk, the inner would be lighter in shade, and more like crape in material; the outer one had immense hanging sleeves: and a large sash of striped silk, tied in an enormous bow behind, finished her toilet.

When her little visitors came she offered them tea and sweetmeats and cakes, and when they left they took away with them, in their sleeves, fragments of the feast, this being considered a polite thing to do.

We played at all the things we saw grown-up people do, and at various games, and guessed riddles, and had good times and great fun, though we did not fail to receive and take leave of our visitors with great ceremony, and to wave our fans in the politest manner possible.

I dare say Bob is thinking how "soft" we must have been; but if he had seen little boys from four years old wrestling

with all their little might, playing leap-frog, jumping, running, and doing fearful gymnastics on bamboo poles, he would be obliged to change his mind, even though it might seem strange to him that there was so little anger and roughness mixed up with so much fighting. I have noticed that foreign children seem to get angry much sooner than ours do. In fact, ours will play for hours without any ill-temper, though with the greatest earnestness. Perhaps this, too, comes of our being spoilt as babies. Who knows?

CHAPTER II.

"I WILL BE A SAMURAI."

HANA and I were inseparable. Hana was a wise, sedate little thing, while I was scatter-brained, they said, but quick at learning *what I liked*. Now what I liked was to read stories of old times and of great warriors, and to hear poems and ballads over and over till I could repeat some of them by heart.

One day Hana and I were talking earnestly. I said I should like to wear two swords and be bowed to by all the common people, like the samurai—to be a great soldier, or else a man of letters.

"But," said Hana, "our father is a farmer. Don't you know, Kotarō mine, that no farmer's child is good enough to be a warrior or a man of learning."

"Nay, but I will be," I answered

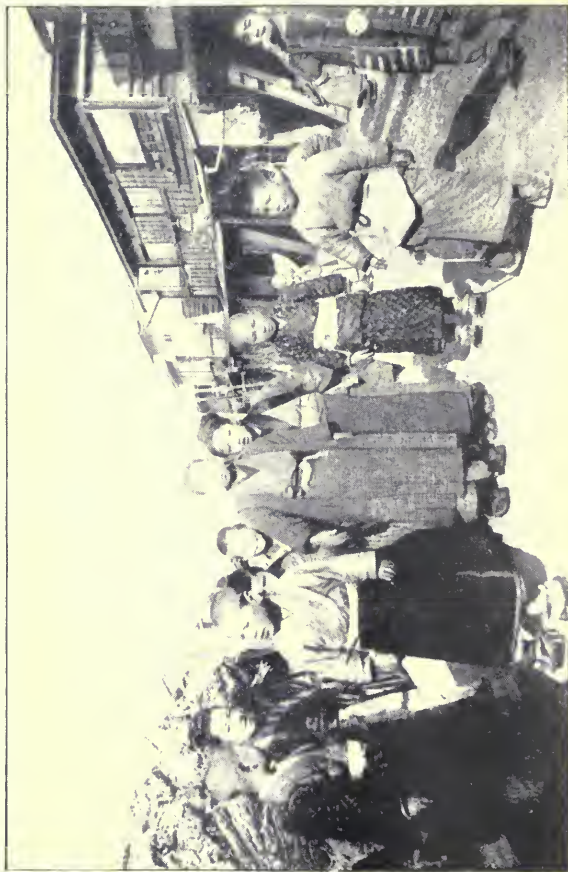


Photo : Karl Lewis, Yokohama.

JAPANESE CHILDREN.

passionately. "I will go this instant to my godfather, the priest who named me, and he shall make me as good as the samurai. And I know that a farmer's son can be a great man, for Taiko-sama was a peasant's son."

Hana stared at my impetuosity, but she never contradicted, and, never having heard of Taiko-sama, was prudently silent.

So we went, hand in hand, pattering along on our high wooden clogs, which we had put on when we left the house, to the priest.

He smiled when told our errand. He did *not* say to me, as some wise-acres of my nation would have done, to check my presumption, "Go build a bridge to the clouds, or throw a stone at the sun"; but, on the contrary, he quoted our saying, "There is no teacher of Japanese poetry" (*i.e.*, as you say in England, "Poets are born, not made"), and said that he knew from

the first I had been born under a lucky star.

“Have I not heard of thy mother’s brother, Darémo, the armourer? If thou wouldst become noble and great, my child, there is one way: seek to be apprenticed to the armourer. It is an honourable calling, and has brought many a worthy man into the ranks of the samurai. And thine uncle has long been counted among them. So esteemed is he for his skill, that even the courtiers travel to Yedo for such swords as he only can make. Work, then, under him, and study philosophy in thy times of leisure, and if thou art worthy, thou mayst be admitted to the paths of literature or of war. But, my son, why not be a priest?”

“Nay, father, I want to do wonderful things, and to sing new songs all my own making, not to be dull and sleepy, and feed pigeons all day long. Perhaps, father, when I am as old as thou——”



Photo : Karl Lewis, Yokohama.

THE CHERRY-BLOSSOM SEASON.
CHILDREN IN THE PARK, YOKOHAMA.

He smiled, and said, "Then, little one, thou mayst indeed be glad to serve the gods in peace and quietness. But now, do as I have said, and I myself will speak to thy father for thee."

The good priest talked to my father earnestly that very night. My father was half angry at my wilfulness, half proud at my ambition. "It comes of his ancestry," he said; "blood will tell when all's said. My little Hana here is a proper farmer's maiden, but Kotarō, with his fine spirit, is not one to keep the farm going. He thinks nothing of looking the samurai straight in the face. Now, they laugh, and praise his manly ways, but as he grows older——Yes, you are right, friend; he had better be one of them than live among us and offend them, and perhaps draw down ruin upon us. His manners will be quite in place at the armourer's. Ah, 'tis a noble art! I am glad my boy has a spirit of his own. He shall go to Yedo. It is

fifth-day to-morrow; we will all go to the fair, and see his uncle; the child is too young to be apprenticed yet." (I was but eight years old.)

It was grand, that going to the fair. Hana and I were comfortably placed on a high walled saddle on our biggest pony. My mother and her maiden took it in turns to ride the smaller one, and my father walked. It was April, but the evergreens that grew everywhere made the landscape darker in its tints than your country looks in spring. Cedars, pines, and cypresses made a background for the bright and beautiful flowers—camelias as tall as your apple trees; cherry, plum, and peach trees all in full blossom, white or red; and the feathery white foliage of our most beautiful tree, the bamboo. It is planted in orchards to support weaker trees; or in masses by itself, when it looks like a clump of giant reeds with polished gold-streaked stems, feathery

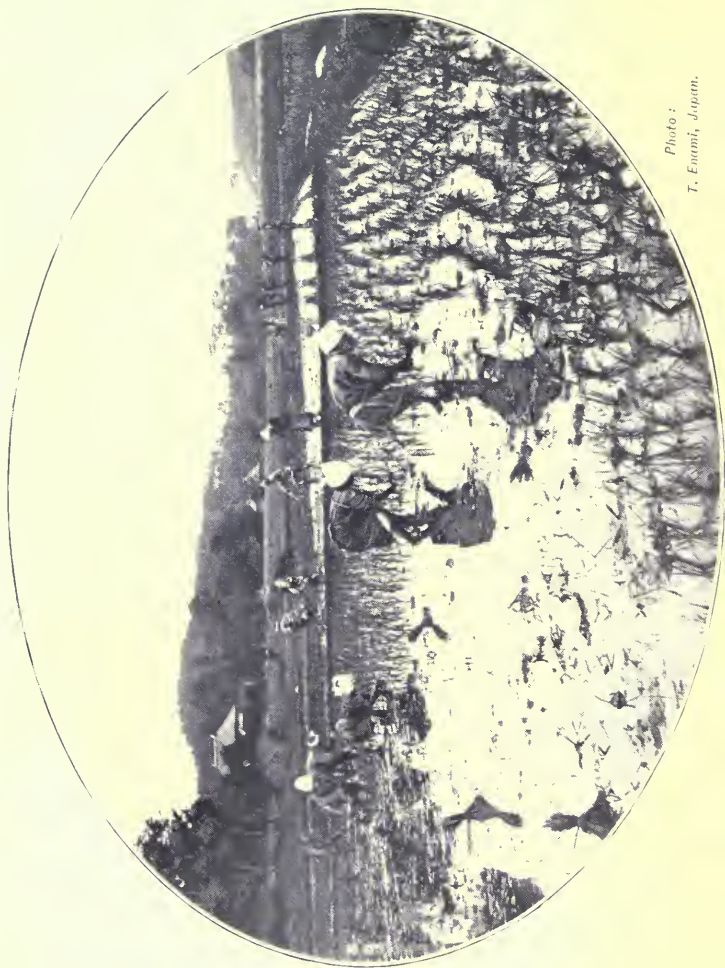


Photo :
T. Enami, Japan.

young shoots at the summit, and its long drooping leaves to the wind.

Our road was bordered by hedges which were thick with violets, only they were scentless, I must confess.

You would hardly believe, seeing all those orchards full of plums, peaches, and cherries, that we children never said, "What a lot of cherries we shall have in June, or peaches in September!" It never occurred to us even to wish for them, for we take such pains to make all these trees flourish for the sake of their flowers alone, that their fruit is poor, and seldom eaten, or eatable. The cherries were in bloom, as large as roses, and their dropped blossoms often whitened the wayside "with snow-showers that do not descend from the skies," as our proverb says. I wonder if any people care for flowers as much as we do? We do not gather great bunches of all kinds, as you do, but we think one sweetly scented branch of cherry or plum-blossom

enough by itself to delight our eyes ; and we have that, and perhaps one or two other beautiful flowers, each in tall porcelain vases, as the chief ornament of our rooms. The city people go out in spring to the "cherry viewing," or the "peach" or "plum viewing," as Londoners go to see the chestnuts in bloom at Bushey Park. The mothers bring their work and their babies, and the fathers take care of the elder ones, and they picnic under the sweet-scented cherry-trees by thousands till the flowering time is over, while storytellers and musicians make their harvest by amusing the happy people.

We passed by many rice-fields, which, like ours, were just beginning to re-appear, after having been under water ; the young shoots on the nursery grounds made a thick close crop, which in some places had been pulled up, root and all, and transplanted into other squares of soft earth, and arranged in a chequered pattern.

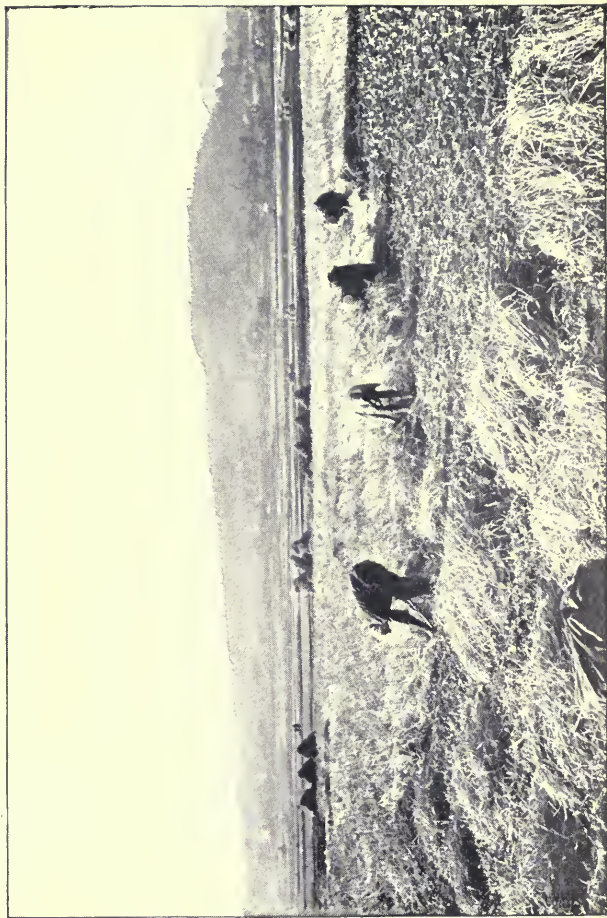


Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

CUTTING RICE.

"Soon it will be harvest-time," said my father, half-sighing.

"Soon? Not till October, father," we cried; at which he smiled, and said to my mother, that "time to the little ones is as long as the scarf of the goddess Kannon."

"But what will you do, father, when the harvest comes, and the little red-and-white birds come to eat it, as they did last time?"

"Then I shall make a network of cords of plaited straw. You shall help, children. We will put it on poles, and hang it all over the fields; and we will hang rags upon the poles, so as to swing about and frighten the birds; and you, Kotarō, must have a little bamboo seat up in the green oak, with a little roof for you of reeds, and pull the cord!"

My father said this gravely, and I was dismayed.

"I sit and pull the cord all day! I, who am to learn letters, and be a gentleman! Oh, father! let some other

little boy do that, some peasant's son." My father laughed, and said no more.

On our way, we came up with pilgrims going to the Temple of Asakusa, where the Goddess of Mercy, Kannon, is worshipped. They wore white clothing, broad hats like umbrellas of bamboo, and carried a bell and staff. They had written their prayers on papers, which they tied to their staves, and they rang the bell to call the goddess's attention to their devotions.

Once a daimio—a great nobleman, like the feudal lords of your Middle Ages—came by. Swift outrunners—tattooed, instead of clothed, from the waist upwards in coloured inks, with figures of dragons, trees, and even portraits of ancient heroes—preceded. Armed retainers rode stiffly on gorgeously caparisoned horses, and the inferior guards surrounded the noble's "norimono," or litter—a box, gold lacquered without, and carefully ornamented within with

delicate curtains made of the drawn threads of bamboo—and that of his wife, with her attendants. There were trains of pack-horses with samurai awkwardly mounted on them, and a retinue of several hundred daring-looking men on foot, all wearing the two swords defiantly; some in armour, and some in quaint and rich clothing, on which the clan-crest was embroidered which shone in the sun, on the streaming flags, and on the panels of the norimono. This nobleman was on his way to Yedo, with his family and a great part of his retainers.

Almost before he was in sight, the outrunners, who were as swift as deer, shouted to us to get out of the way; and you may be sure we hurried to do so when I tell you that these fierce guards would think nothing of killing a peasant who should happen to be in the way, and that would have been considered but a just punishment for

his presumption. Withdrawn into a side-road, we waited for the procession to pass us, falling on our faces as soon as it approached, and scarcely daring even to look at the cavalcade. A halt was made near us, however, by one of the officers, after the daimio had gone on. As we were kneeling reverentially on the grass, waiting till he should pass on, he condescended to ask my father some question, and to notice me—saying that my face was quite like a little samurai's, and that he really thought two swords would become me. All the time we were kneeling with heads to earth, scarcely lifting them even for reply. At this my father answered that I had indeed the honour of inheriting some noble blood, and that we were now on our way to our distinguished relation at Yedo, Darémo the armourer. The officer knew him, and, hearing of my ambitious intentions, graciously promised to give me his pro-



Photo : S. Kujima,
Sutherland Avenue, N.W.

TEA-HOUSE.

tection when I should be of age to require it. Then he and his attendants moved on, while we all again fell on our faces, and drew deep gasping breaths in token of unutterable respect at the parting salutation, sighing out "Sayonara," or "farewell."

About mid-day we stopped at a tea-house, and rested there for an hour or two. Passing through the outer room, we left our maid there to help in preparing our meal of rice, seaweed-jelly, eggs, tea, and fish, on the raised floor about a foot from the ground, which is the cooking-place and the lounge alike for those who frequent these small inns. The servants brought soft mats, four inches thick, for us to lie upon, and a little wooden bolster for our heads, with a paper-pad as pillow; and we children, after we had taken our meal, lay peacefully in the inner room, divided from the outer only by a paper-wall, which could be slid open when we wanted, and was the

only door from the merry guests in the public-room. So we slept, tired with the half-day's excitements, till an unusual noise awoke us, and, looking through a hole in the well-worn paper-panel, we saw some conjurers in the courtyard!

Such tricks as they played we had never seen before, nor do I think that you ever have, Nelly. There were snakes in baskets, which did just what they were told: there were beetles harnessed with wax to paper-carts loaded with rice, which they drew up to the top of a slanting board; there were magic fishes, which moved in the water at the conjurer's word of command; and tortoises, which stood upright, marched, and went forward, backward, stopped, and climbed over each other, to the beats of a drum. The conjurer put a little water in a basin, and then, by a wave of his fan, made it increase till the basin was filled; then it rose into a fountain, or sank back

into the basin, as the wind was skilfully made to play upon it by the juggler's fan ; but Hana and I did not guess what made it move, especially as he used mystifying words, to puzzle and overawe us. But when a man put a lump of paste all on fire into his mouth we cried out, and thought the poor man would be burnt ; and it was worse still, though delightful, to see another man first walk on the edge of a sword and then swallow it—though all the while, when we got too frightened, our parents assured us no harm would come to the poor men ; and, indeed, we saw them looking quite well and smoking comfortably in the kitchen before we left.

But I must make haste, for at this rate you will be grown-up before I finish my story. But you must remember that this was the longest day we children had ever spent, for we had never been such an excursion before, and more excitements were crowded into those twelve

hours than we had experienced in a whole year of our usual life.

When we reached Darémo's house it was twilight, and the paper lanterns, which every one who goes out after dark is bound to carry with his name or sign upon it, had begun to flit about. My uncle welcomed us heartily, and in a very short time arranged his house for our accommodation. Like most Japanese houses, it was built of wood, one storey high, with the floor raised a foot above the ground, and covered with matting, invariably of one size; in the flooring were grooves, along which the thick paper partitions I have already mentioned could be slid backwards or forwards. My uncle being a lonely widower, with no occasion for more than one living room, when we arrived put us into one large apartment, which, by means of the sliding walls, he speedily made into three. A verandah ran round the house, and wooden shutters were

TWO SLEEPING GIRLS.

Photo : W. H. Rau, Philadelphia, 1893.



fitted to it, in the same way as the interior walls. In the day-time these were taken down, and stood in a corner; but at night, until the hot weather set in, they were put up. When closed, the house looked like a box, from the outside; and we within felt what you call "boxed up." But when we arrived, the shutters were not closed, so we saw the friendly lantern, with my uncle's name printed in red on a white ground, shining over the doorway, and hard by was his forge.

Our evening meal was quickly ready, and we children soon fell asleep, while our parents were taken by our uncle to see some of the sights of the fair. Fairs are nearly always going on in or about Yedo, and we were promised that this one would be just as good the next day, and in that faith we shut our tired eyes contentedly.

CHAPTER III.

FAIRS AND FESTIVALS.

MY uncle readily consented to receive me, and only pressed that it should be at once, as he was lonely, and had often longed for companionship. It was agreed that I should remain with him when my parents returned home, and should thenceforth be considered his adopted child.

Hana cried a little, gently and submissively, when she heard I was to be left with my uncle. I, too, could have cried at the thought of leaving my little playfellow, but pride forbade, so I set myself to comfort her by telling of all the wonderful things I was going to do; among which I mentioned becoming the first poet of the empire and the most invincible warrior Japan had ever boasted.

I think Hana cried the more at the martial picture I placed before her, as I did not forget to mention the fearful wounds that I should receive as well as inflict, since the more I harrowed her feelings and my own, the more proud I felt that *I* was to be the subject of such thrilling experiences.

But now it was after breakfast, and time to go to the fair, so we forgot all about the future hero of Japan, and set off in great spirits.

Now I must tell you that the fair we went to was held in the grounds of the temple of Asakusa, whither the pilgrims we met the day before were bound.

It was a long two-miles walk, and my mother wanted to put us in a "kago," a kind of basket-work litter, which was the commonest means of conveyance in Japan. But we stoutly declared we were not, and could not get tired, so we were allowed to walk.

We crossed an old wooden high-arched bridge, which we were much disappointed to hear was Nihon Bashi, "The Bridge of Japan." All the highways are measured from it, and every peasant in Japan has heard of Nihon Bashi, and expects to see something very splendid.

But there was much to make amends. The streets of shops were full of wonders to little rustics like ourselves. What a crowd there was! "Common people" everywhere; the little children running barefoot, but rosy, bright-eyed and clean all the same; the little boys (like myself) with shaven heads all but a wisp pulled over the forehead, and only wearing a blue cotton tunic or wrapper bound tight to the waist by a girdle three inches wide; the little girls, if old enough to carry themselves, also staggering under the weight of a baby brother or sister; everyone hatless and bonnetless so long as it does not rain; the grown-up people, some on wooden clogs and some with

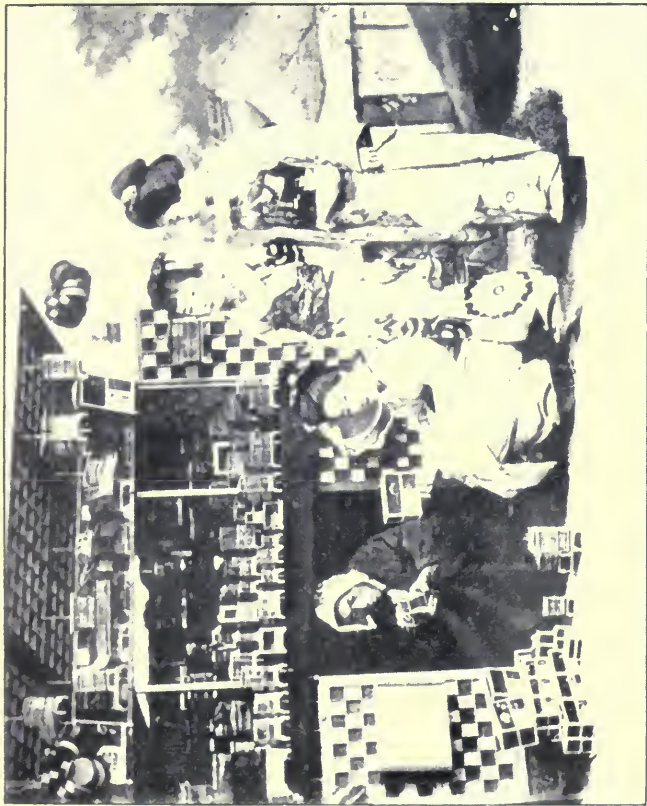


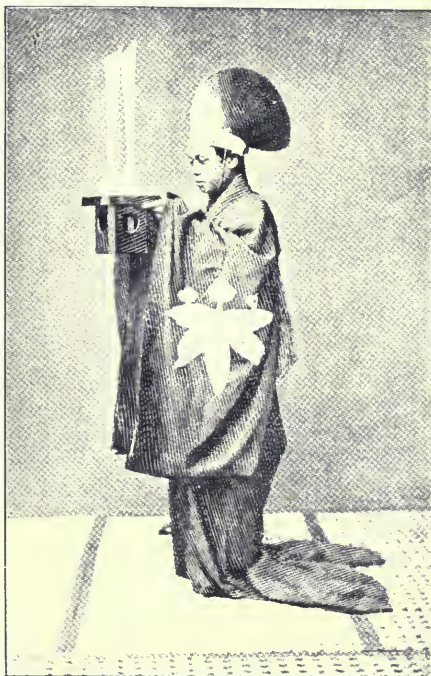
Photo. Karl Lewis, Yokohama.

JAPANESE SINGING INSECTS SELLER.



their feet in straw sandals, as often stockingless as not; the porters standing idly but anxiously waiting to be asked to carry some lady's purchases home for her in rope-woven baskets hanging to a shoulder-stick—the shopkeeper and his apprentice carrying wares, in a chest slung from poles, to a customer; the travelling pastrycook setting up his stall by the wayside, and not only making griddle-cakes for the eager children, but, more delightful still, letting them make these dainties for themselves, lending gridiron and brazier, cup, saucer and spoon, and giving the batter and sauce, on payment of one cash! Farther on, men and children alike are crowding round the shop where sweet potatoes are being served out steaming hot from the oven. Strolling players, boys and girls, are acting children's plays for the children's benefit, while men are hurrying to their work, or pushing heavy burdens on small but clumsy large-wheeled carts.

Here are pack-horses loaded several feet high, and so badly that the burdens keep sliding down; and then what confusion and what shouting as the animals struggle and kick to get the rest of the burden safely off and pursue their own sweet will!—shaven priests, with flowing crape robes and brocade collars, and with rosary in hand; young girls, whose white teeth, carefully arranged hair, and bright crimson skirts show them to be still unmarried! Here, too, are officers on horseback, mounted stiffly on high lacquered and gilded saddles, holding the broad silk reins in both hands so tightly that the horses' heads are nearly upright, their feet resting in flat stirrups larger than the foot, the two swords projecting from their girdles, while the manes and tails of the much-arrayed horses are tied up with silk and tassels, and their hoofs are shod with straw.



SHINTO PRIEST OFFERING "SAKÉ."

*From photo supplied by the
Church Missionary Society.*

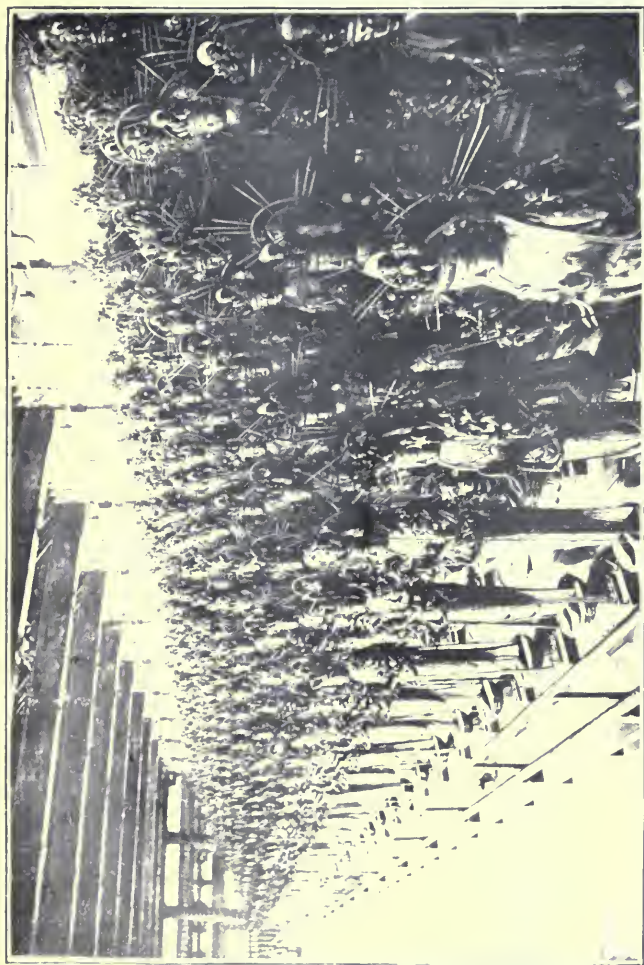
Thrifty housewives, with blackened teeth, shaved eyebrows, and sober dress, intent on cheap housekeeping, meet the fine lady descending from her *norimono* before the great silk warehouses, where she will buy delicately tinted silks and crapes. Soldiers, swaggering and two-sworded, jostle the timid and apologetic artisan out of the way. Kago-bearers trot along, resting every now and then to change shoulders; and yellow dogs bark and run in among the crowd, and seem like the babies to say, "Here am I, please run over me," which the Japanese, being trained by their religion to be kind to animals, good-naturedly decline to do, spite of much provocation.

The nearer we came to the Temple grounds the more did we children see that was specially interesting to us. But I shall have more to tell of our plays and toys presently. Now I must explain a little about our Temple and religion.

We have two religions in Japan, very different in their original meaning and in their ceremonies, yet not so unlike in results as would be supposed by a stranger. The older and native religion is called Kami-worship, or Shinto, the other is Buddhism. Shinto is a kind of worship of ancestors, or of warriors, or public benefactors who lived long ago.

The Shinto sacred book, "The Book of Ancient Traditions," only contains stories of gods and heroes. The Shinto commandments are these:—

1. Thou shalt honour the gods, and love thy country.
2. Thou shalt clearly understand the principles of heaven [religion], and the duty of man.
3. Thou shalt revere the Mikado as thy sovereign, and obey the will of his court.



SANJIU SAN GEN DŌ.

When asked how we know the "duty of man," a Shinto believer will answer that a Japanese needs only to look into his heart, and follow what it teaches him, to do what is right on all occasions.

Shintoism was the religion of the Japanese as far back as we have records, and reverence for the Mikado or Emperor is a part of it. The Shinto Bible, written about the year 712 of your era, professes to give the date of the first Mikado, and of all his successors up to that period; and although it is not certain that he ever really existed, we date our years from his supposed reign. He is represented as having been a divine being, descended from the "Sun-Goddess," while it is said that Japan was created before any other country, and so it is called "The Land of the Gods."

You know, Nelly, that sometimes people exaggerate something that is

true till it becomes more false than true *as they represent it*; and so, if we want to know the truth, we have to try and disentangle it from all that is not truth. Now, it is supposed by those who study our history most, that the Demi-gods, Mikados, and Heroes of our early traditions may have been real people, who came later from Asia, and were cleverer and wiser than those they reigned over, so that the ignorant and simple natives, overawed and dazzled by what they did, got to ascribe to them many absurd things that they could not do.

Even my mother taught us, when the first American steamer was seen in our harbour, to pray that the foreign sorcerers, who had power over a volcano to tame and use it for their purposes, might be sent away from our shores.

She thought, and many a Japanese besides, that Europeans and Americans were not even men, but some kind of

dragon-sorcerers, and that the chimney of the steamer was puffing out the breath of the great Fire-spirit.

This will help you to understand how much of our history may have a true foundation. One thing is certain, that Mikados have reigned in Japan from time immemorial, and that they have always been of one and the same family, though the throne did not descend invariably from father to son, but any one of the same blood might be adopted by the reigning Mikado as his successor.

Take away eleven hundred years from our history, if you like, Nelly, as "mythical," and that will still leave our Mikado as the representative of the oldest reigning house in the world. Ancestors of his have *certainly* reigned over us for twelve hundred years, and probably much longer!

As a rule, Shintoism has been the religion favoured by the Mikado's Government, as a means of promoting loyalty

and patriotism. The Shinto temples and the Mikado's palace are built alike, and called by the same word to express their sacredness. There are no idols in the temples. A mirror of polished metal is placed on a stand in the innermost court, and is supposed to be a symbol of the presence of the gods. (It is believed, too, that a guilty man's face is reflected back to him distorted, if he dares to gaze on it.) Besides the mirror, there is a wooden wand called the *gohei*, with slips of white paper tied to it and hanging down, which has some similar meaning, but no one knows clearly what. A *gohei* is often put up in "groves and high places," and prayers are said before it.

The Mikado's palace and the Shinto temples are built of fine-grained wood, with steep thatched roofs; and no paint, gilding, or ornament is allowed to defile them. No sacrifices are made, but offerings are daily laid before the

altars. Pigeons are considered sacred, and kept in flocks in the Temple gardens: they perch on a cross-bar joining two upright beams, which is called a *Torii*, and is in front of every Shinto temple, but never before Buddhist temples. The Shinto priests marry; they do not shave their heads, nor do they dress differently from other people, except when officiating; then they dress in pure white robes and high lacquer caps. Their office goes from father to son. The chief priests are of royal descent, and some are Government servants. Sometimes virgin priestesses officiate.

The Buddhist religion was about a thousand years old when it was brought to Japan near A.D. 600. Like Shintoism, it does not profess to be idolatrous, but, like that, it has become so in practice.

It is the popular religion. At first the people did not care for it, but in the ninth century it occurred to a priest

that the gods and heroes whom the natives worshipped must certainly be "incarnations of Buddha," and if so, that their images ought to be set up in the Buddhist temples; and his belief spread and was acted on. Then the people turned to the Buddhist religion, and ever since Buddhism and Shintoism have had some gods and some ceremonies in common; and small chapels or shrines dedicated to some god or hero named in the "Sacred Traditions," whose image is placed within, are often erected within the grounds of a Buddhist temple, side by side with others built in honour of Buddhist saints. So it was at Asakusa, where many little chapels were clustered about the great Temple. Everyone goes to Asakusa, which is to Yedo something like what St. Paul's is to London, and still more like the shrine of some great Roman Catholic saint in the Middle Ages.

After crossing the river in a ferry-boat, we entered the grounds; Hana

and I, with my mother and the maid, while my father and uncle, being men, and therefore too dignified to walk with womankind in public, kept a little apart. (Excuse me, Nelly, we mean to alter all that as soon as we can!)

At Asakusa there are almost as many fairs and festivals as days in the year, and this was a gala-day as usual. As we approached, even I, the chatterbox of the family, grew silent, quite overcome at the sight of all the wonders before me.

So we went, silent and breathless, up the long avenue lined with booths, where everything that babies, boys or girls, devotees or pilgrims could desire was for sale, and passed through the great gateway, curiously carved in dull-red wood, and nearly seventy feet high, to the courtyard of the Temple. Just inside we were awe-struck by "The Two Kings," two hideous and gigantic idols, one red, one green, which stared down

upon us on either hand; but we were assured that, though their nature and office is to torture human beings in one of the Buddhist hells, they could, if propitiated, cure footsore peasants; and, if that was any proof, straw sandals in plenty were hung up before them by the country people.

Our maid instantly produced a new one from her sleeve, and hung it to the grating for her own benefit. We had seen her buy the sandals in the city, but she would not then tell us what for; now we saw that she had come prepared, and she said—with her good-tempered face smiling all over—she was sure she should be cured, as it was plain that most people had brought their *old* sandals, and her more respectful way of treating the “Two Kings” would not pass unrewarded. We hoped not, but wondered she dared go near them; and I, the future hero of Japan, did not emulate her bravery. Some beggars at the gate

offered to pray for us, and we dropped them some cash as we went by. Turning to the right, we entered the holy-water chapel, where the mouth is rinsed and the hands are washed before prayer. (This custom is invariable, whether the temple be small or great, or whether there be a temple or not.) To the right, too, was a seven-storied pagoda hung with bells that tinkled in the breeze, and with a spire of enormous copper rings, like a gigantic corkscrew, which I afterwards climbed up one day, but which to-day I could only gaze at with amazement. Thousands of pigeons were flying about both outside and inside the Temple, and we had the delight of seeing them fly down in flocks to eat the sacred beans we had brought for them, while a white horse with pink eyes, also sacred, did not disdain to eat up the rest of our bean store, and we clapped our hands at the condescension of both pigeons and horse.

We went up the broad steps into the outer court of the immense steep-roofed Temple and fell on our faces on entering; we then arose, and first flinging some cash into the treasury and some incense in the censer, began our devotions. Streams of people passed to and fro, pigeons flew about, drums beat, incense smoked, and bells tinkled. In front, behind an iron screen, was the chief altar, and the figure of the goddess in a closed shrine behind it, with other golden and bronze idols, figures of Buddha and others, round about.

Like all the rest we bowed in prayer, clapping the hands and raising them above the head. My father, anxious for his little son's welfare, having written his petition for me, chewed it to a pulp, and then aimed it from his mouth towards the idol!

"What for?" do you ask, Nelly? It is supposed, I believe, like the ringing

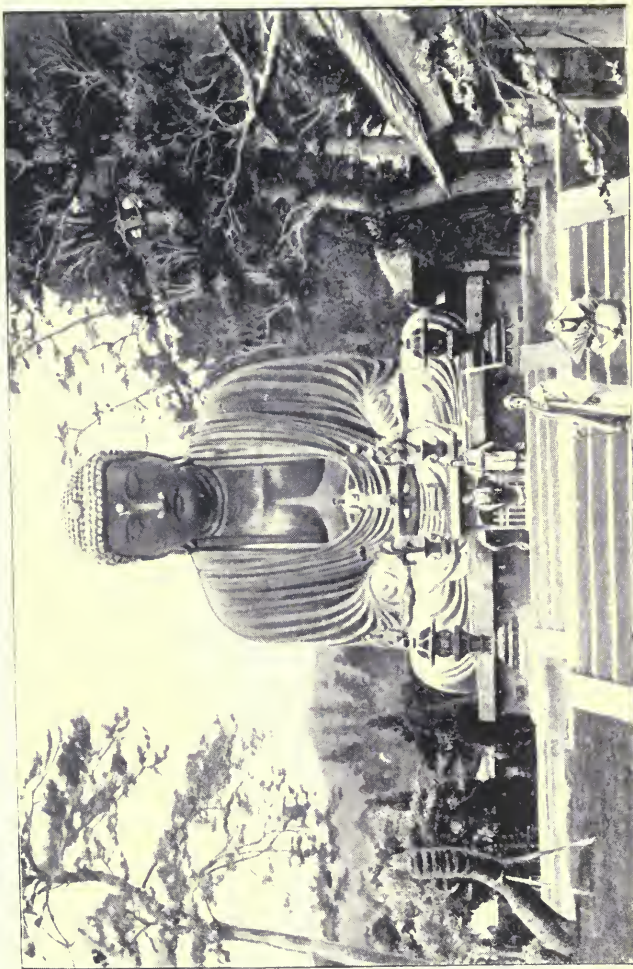
of handbells, to compel the idol to attend to us. When the chewed pellet strikes the idol, or, if there is a screen before it, the screen, and *sticks*, we are glad, and think our prayer has been heard and will be answered, but if it fail to reach one or the other, we think both wish and paper of no avail.

Sometimes less severe measures are resorted to, and we content ourselves with hanging up our written prayers within sight of the idol. But you will see some popular favourite idol spotted all over by the persistent personal application of the people's prayers! We saw one wooden image, supposed to have the gift of healing, with its face all worn down, and black and polished from constant rubbing.

The blind are guided to touch its eyes, and then their own; the lame stroke its ankle, and then the withered limb; the mother lays her ailing infant against it and hopes to take home

strength for him. Meanwhile we moved among the crowds, going from one altar to another, while some of the people smoked and chatted, and others prayed with the deepest earnestness. Their prayers might seem strange and irreverent to you, Nelly ; but with us, as with all other men and women, there are the earnest and the indifferent—those who feel deep needs of the soul or body, and seek help or consolation, alive to their own helplessness, and trusting with more or less intensity that there may be pity and compassion for them in the invisible world ; those who have no real desires or aspirations—whose aim is comfort and success, and who go to the Temple because it is usual to do so, and pray without reverence, and make petitions without hope or expectation of answer.

A number of offerings or votive tablets are hung against the walls and pillars. Some are given that prayer



"DIABUTSU" OR GREAT BUDDHA, AT KAMAKURA.

may be answered, others from gratitude that it has apparently been answered.

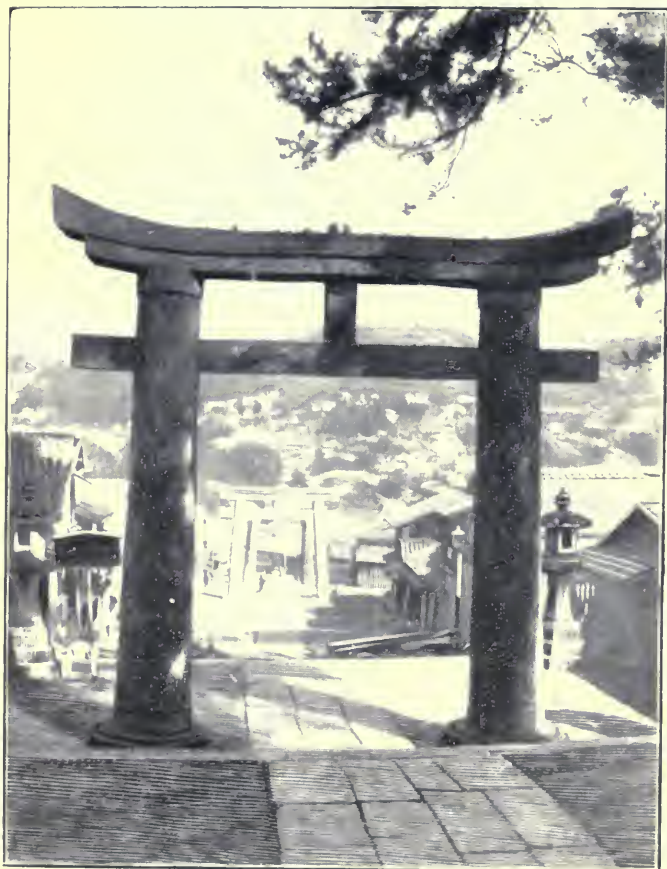
Many men and women make vows, in token of which the men cut off their top-knots, and the women their braids, and hang them against the wire screen, in Kannon's honour. She, as the Goddess of Mercy, is believed to have saved many from shipwreck, and sailors will often come here before and after a voyage to pray, or give thanks, generally bringing some gift with them.

When we had left the Temple we went to see the great bell, whose deep melodious tones are heard for miles away, when it is struck (being fixed) by a wooden hammer. We looked up at the bronze statue of Buddha, sitting with clasped hands and calm and grave face above the noisy throng; we saw the sacred car, in which the goddess is carried in procession with hymns and dances on great festivals; and the scripture temple, containing the Buddhist

sacred writings on a movable shrine, which can be turned round and round by a little exertion on the part of two or three men. This exertion my father and uncle did not fail to make, as to turn the shrine once round counts as if you had read the scriptures it contains once through.

We saw the gods of the four quarters of the world in another chapel, life-sized monsters, with staring eyes and bright-coloured garments that seem to be blown about by the four winds, each trampling on some demon, as grotesque and startling in hue as himself—in red, or green, or blue.

Lastly we saw the so-called wax-works, thirty-five beautiful groups, life-size and life-like, hidden among the winding mazes of trees, and representing the miracles of Kannon, or preternatural events in the lives of her devotees. All were done by one man, in honour of what he believed to be a true deity.



SIWA TEMPLE.

*Photo. S. Kurihara,
Saitama Prefecture, N. 33*

There are thirty-three great temples to Kannon scattered over Japan, and pious persons make the pilgrimage to all, if they can.

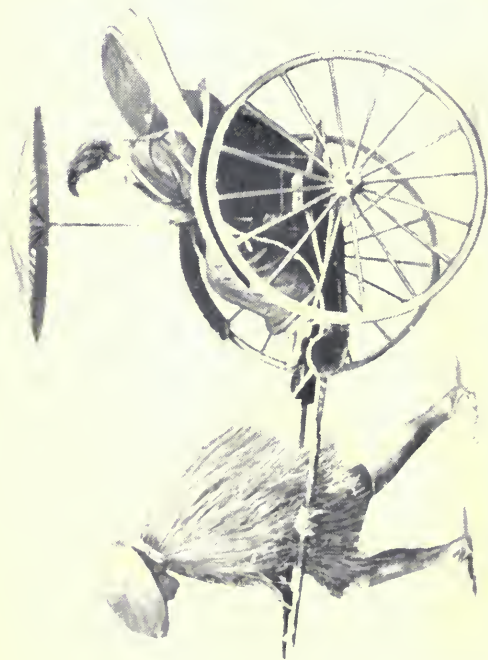
I wish I could tell you about these waxworks, but it would take too long.

After seeing the temples, we rested in one of the little tea-booths, and then our childish pleasures began. The dwarf trees and plants in the gardens were cut into the oddest shapes. Fuji was often done in miniature, and so were tortoises, cats, houses, carts, and men and women, anything and everything the clever gardeners of Yedo can twist a plant into. We saw real forest trees kept from growing, or dwarfed, when two inches from the ground (not baby-trees, you know), and green and healthy notwithstanding.

There were old men, with two brushes in one hand, painting little sacred pictures, for memorials of the Temple, and my uncle bought us each

one. Others were kneading paste into curious gaily coloured little models of noblemen, flowers, ladies, &c. These also we desired to have, and were gratified, about as much being spent on all our purchases as would equal twopence of your money. But we are a poor people, and a very little money has to go a very long way with us.

So the long happy fair-day passed, in hearing music and watching dances, wandering among many happy groups like ourselves, through gardens and pleasure-grounds, trying to count the cherry trees overhead ; and eating sweets, after the seller of them had danced to his drum to beguile us to buy of him. As we went home across the bridge, we gave a last look at the groves of Asakusa, and the broad shining river reddened by the setting sun ; and then we and our treasures were carried away in a kago by two strong men, who took us home with a run.



TRAVELLING CARRIAGE AND MEDICINE SELLER.

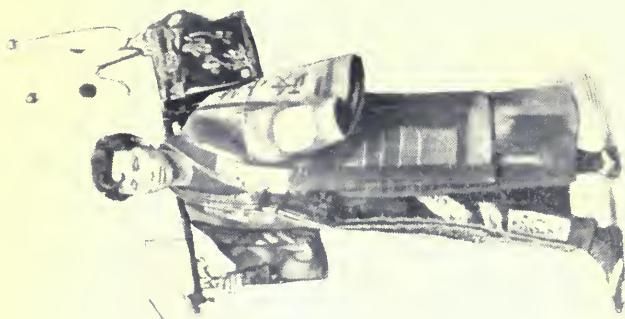


Photo : W. H. Rau,
Philadelphia, 1893.

Then the feet of all were washed, the sandals laid aside, and the evening meal taken; by then it was nightfall, and the *next* longest day of my little life was over.

CHAPTER IV.

WITH MY UNCLE IN YEDO.

WHILE I take breath, Nelly, you may ask me a few questions. “ Why did you fall on your faces to the officers ? Who were the samurai ? How do you manage without chairs ? How large is Yedo ? Is it the capital, like London ? What do you mean by the two swords you are always talking about ? Where are the windows in your houses ? How do you manage without fire-places ? What kind of books have you ? What did you mean about sleeves and pockets ? Did you ever see your Emperor ? Why did Hana say *you* couldn’t be a learned man ? What made you come to England ? How did you hear about Christians ? Are there many missionaries

in Japan? Do people like them? Will all the Japanese be Christians some day?"

Well, that's a "good few," as I have heard some of your people say, and will do for the present. I do not mean to answer them categorically (that means one by one, Nelly), but I will try to tell you all you want to know incidentally (*that* means, Nelly, as each happens to come in), in this little sketch of my life. So now peer once more into my looking-glass.

My parents and Hana went home next morning. I felt the parting sadly, but it could not be to me what it was to them, for I was beginning a new life, though away from their tender care, and they were going back to the old, and losing the little child whose wild spirits and harum-scarum ways were the torment and the life of the house. It was dreadful to part from Hana, but my uncle cheered Hana by drawing pictures of my future greatness, as a two-sworded

officer, before whom all the common people would bow down some day.

Both parents caressed me tenderly, while telling me to be a good boy; but neither father, mother, nor Hana gave me a kiss,* nor did my uncle and father shake hands at parting. But they bowed, with hands sliding down to the knees, and gently shaking them; and we children touched the earth with our foreheads for some seconds, I to my good parents, and Hana to my uncle; and all of us exchanged the last sighs of respect, the indrawn gasping breaths, which it would have been as strange for us to omit as for you to forget to say good-bye.

An old woman-servant helped my uncle to take care of me. The front of our house contained the kitchen and entrance, and the living room or rooms

* Japanese mothers leave off kissing their children when they are about three years old. Neither kissing nor shaking hands is practised by grown-up people.



Photo T. Enomoto, Japan.

CHRYSANTHEMUM GARDEN, YOKOHAMA

were behind, looking out upon the garden with its goldfish-pond, cascade, bridge, and mound, a landscape in miniature, as is our fashion in gardening, with winding walks, bordered by dwarf trees cut in curious patterns, and a summer-house on the mound, with bamboo, and orange, and green-oak trees, sweet-blossomed fruit trees, yellow jasmine, the blue wistaria, and other beautiful flowers, carefully trained and tended. From the mound we could look across and between the grey low-roofed houses, and see the river running swiftly seawards, with its freight of boats and junks—the castle-towers and the high pagodas with copper and gilt-edged roofs shining in the sun, or the steep bark-thatched Shinto temples rising from the midst of venerable dark-foliaged trees.

Yes, Yedo is a great city, Nelly, and comes nearer to London than almost any other for size and population, yet it is as different as one great city possibly

can be from another. It stretches for over twenty miles, and contains above a million and a half inhabitants; but within the city limits are parks and pleasure-grounds so spacious that you may "ride and walk for miles in the solitude and freshness of the country," and yet be in Yedo all the time. Some quarters are crowded with the trading and working population; but the hundreds of temples, with the gardens and pleasure-grounds which invariably surround them, the cemeteries on the hill-sides, and the court-quarter, which, though full of busy life in its interior, is little frequented in its main streets—these take up immense spaces, so that the aspect is strangely varied.

My uncle's house was one of the usual middle-class. All who entered left their straw sandals, or wooden clogs or shoes, at the door, and with bare feet or clad in cloth socks having a division for the great toes (round which the sandal

or shoe thongs are passed), trod the fine spotless linen-bordered matting of the inner rooms. The hot bath is invariably used by Japanese when the day's work is over, and often in the day-time also; and the feet are frequently washed, as is customary in countries where chairs are not used, so that our floors are as carefully kept as your tables.

As my uncle was a man of substance, one or two chests contained his swords of honour, ceremonial dress, silken quilts, and some pictures, and books of engravings; while some fine porcelain, books and manuscripts, fans and curiosities were kept in a gold inlaid lacquer cabinet. Two or three small lacquer tables about a foot high stood in recesses ready for use at meals, with tiny lacquer and porcelain cups or bowls, dishes and teapots, and a few large china waiters on shelves. With the exception of one or two flower vases which stood on brackets, and a fan-holder and sword

rack, there was little or nothing else; and had my uncle been a poor man, more than half the things I have named would have been wanting.

A kotatsu—a bowl sunk in the floor and usually covered by matting—was filled with live coals when it was extremely cold, and a wooden frame, a foot high, set over it; a large thickly wadded quilt was then spread over all, and on this we sat, and gathering the ends of the quilt round us, were deliciously warm in a few minutes.

Usually the hibachi sufficed. The old servant cooked at an oven in the centre of the kitchen with a raised floor round it, which was a favourite resting-place for the tradespeople and servants on their errands.

As soon as we rose the wooden shutters were opened, the paper panels slid away, and the windows (of thin transparent paper set in a wooden framework) turned back; the quilts were



JAPANESE LADY IN
A SHOWER.

*Photo : S. Kajima,
Sutherland Avenue, N.W.*

shaken and folded and put into a recess ; the floor swept, the matting cleansed from speck or stain, and the woodwork and wall-paper, screens and pictures, carefully dusted and brushed. For the rest of the day you could see right through the house to the garden, and watch our occupations without hindrance. We live much more in public than you do, and many of our customs which strike foreigners as so strange and wrong do not seem wrong to us, to whom privacy is unknown.

The paper panels of our inner walls can be slipped out at pleasure, so those who can afford it have changes of papering, and buy beautifully painted picture-panels of flowers, landscapes, or figure scenes. The ceilings are often papered, as are the walls if solid, or else we have pictures, also on paper, hung on rollers, or set in screens, as well as books of drawings. About once a week we change the scenery on our walls ; and one or

two tall vases on brackets are changed in like manner. If our rooms may appear empty and cheerless in winter, they seem to us, in their simplicity and freshness, and in the beauty of the little ornament we have, peculiarly attractive in summer.

We go about, as I have said, hatless and bonnetless, except in cold or rainy weather. While we wear or may wear less clothing in summer than any other nation not absolutely uncivilised, in winter we wrap up like Esquimaux, to whom, by the bye, some say we are closely related. Then both men and women wear close-fitting cloth caps or hoods, with long flaps which wind round the throat and face till only the eyes and a bit of the face can be seen, and as many wadded wrappers as we can carry. In rainy weather we use straw or oiled paper waterproof cloaks, and broad umbrella-shaped straw or rush hats, and these also are worn as sunshades by outdoor labourers.

The dress of men and women—rich and poor—is on the same pattern, though many slight differences teach us the rank of the wearer. It consists of an ample garment similar to your dressing-gown, which is folded over the chest and confined by a girdle. The material is cotton for the poor; the same, wadded, is their winter dress. By the well-to-do, cloth, damask or brocade, satin or silk, are worn, and these garments are also wadded in the winter. Coloured crapes are also used, chiefly for ladies' dresses and neckerchiefs, and ceremonial dresses for men. Some officials wear a dress very much like that of your ancient Beef-eaters, as they appear in the pictures of the time of Henry VIII., with cocked hat, long embroidered coat, &c. We are, I confess, often very uncomfortable in winter; but our winters are short and the summer long and generally hot; so we regard our winters as you do the

few warm days (you call them hot !) you get in England—they are too little a part of our life for us to prepare for them. *You* arrange your lives so as to be comfortable in changeable, but generally coldish weather. *We*, so as to be comfortable in settled, generally warmish, and often hot weather. We are hardy too, and many of our labourers and their children go through even freezing weather with scarcely an addition to their summer clothing.

Our sleeves are so long and large that a part of them is always used as a pocket. They are bound up when in our way, and in cold weather they are comfortable hiding-places for our frost-nipped fingers. As a rule we sit to our work—that is, sit Japanese fashion, kneeling and resting on our heels.

I soon began to study “literature,” being as yet too young to do much more than look on at my uncle’s calling. Much of our learning and



GROUP OF JAPANESE CHILDREN.

civilisation is owing to the Chinese, especially to those fugitives from Korea, who brought their books and arts with them, and were accompanied by Buddhist missionaries, in the sixth century (A.D.). So our scholars have to study Chinese as yours do Latin, and many Chinese words and phrases being mixed up with the Japanese, have to be explained in the margin of books intended for unlearned readers. I worked hard and gladly, child as I was. I had learnt pretty well already the simple Japanese alphabet, and was able to read with some ease words composed of it; and now I worked at the more difficult one in which Chinese characters are mixed, and at the same time at the Chinese language itself, which I could not hope to read fluently under four or five years, if then—seven or eight are a common allowance for the making of a good Chinese scholar among us.

We have many history books for children, and as I began to read in them, my childish enthusiasm for "our Japan" deepened; for they are full of examples of courage and self-devotion, to which young hearts quickly respond, whether in Japan or elsewhere. In them, to my surprise, I, who had rather looked down on women, seeing how submissive they were bound to be to *us*, found that long ago Japanese ladies had written beautiful books in Japanese; and, still more wonderful, that there had been great empresses—nine in all—who had ruled Japan with a hand as strong and more even than that of your Queen Elizabeth.

There was one empress who was so famous a warrior that she is counted among the emperors, not with the nine others.

I don't know, Nelly, by the bye, whether, when you grow up, you mean to be great on women's rights and

powers; but if you do, I should advise you to study your Japanese brother's national history, and to have the names of the nine empresses at your fingers' ends, and, above all, to mention our women authors in prose and verse: women like the charming Murasaki Shibiku, who, being asked to write "something new" for an empress's amusement, had a small house built overlooking Lake Biwa, and retired to it to seek inspiration from the lake and mountains. So one moonlit night "it came," when she wrote two chapters of the "Genji Monogatari," and in a few weeks finished it and presented it to the empress. This book is now considered a standard work, and "the parent of the Japanese novel." Much, too, if not most, of our best poetry is by women, and they share with men the honour, or disgrace as your Dr. Johnson would have called it, of being great punsters. I

said just now that they wrote in Japanese, the reason of this being that it was not permitted to "women and common people" to study the learned dialect, or Chinese. Thus the learned and pedantic men wrote in one style, and accomplished women in another. The difference is like that between your Dr. Johnson's ponderous sentences, in which most of the words are of Latin origin, and the simple Saxon of the "Pilgrim's Progress" or "Robinson Crusoe." The one chooses "dictionary words," which don't *strike home*, because they are seldom or ever used in talking; the other chooses the simple words and expressions you use and have heard used every day since you were a baby. So you see, what learned men of old in Japan did not condescend to do, women were left to do—to improve and beautify the everyday dialect by their writings, until it came to be honoured. So, too, the English, after despising



STANDING LANTERN.

*Photo: S. Kojima,
Sutherland Avenue, N.W.*

their mother-tongue, have come to honour and prefer it.

I wrote a letter to Hana as soon as I was able, in which I did not fail to tell her these remarkable facts, and suggested to her that she might make haste and learn, so that we might write a book together. This I felt to be a great condescension, as Hana was, I considered, dull, and a girl besides; but I was at that age when to be clever seems the one desirable thing in life. So, as I dearly loved my good little sister, I wished her to have all that I prized.

My uncle helped me in the composition of this literary effort, and I sealed it in vermilion with my own seal, which had my name on it.

Hana answered speedily, and she and my mother sent me a packet of *yokan*—a compound of beans, sugar and seaweed-jelly—and a new girdle of blue silk, on which was embroidered my name.

Hana's letter said that she was well content to help our mother to spin and embroider, as well as to learn to play the samisen; but that though she loved to hear a *short* poem, and would in fact listen to a long one if *I* had written it, as a rule she fell asleep when she had much to read or hear read. In fact, like good practical people everywhere, she had no time for reading, and thought the study of literature a waste of time. But this Hana was too kind and polite to say.

So my plans for our joint fame came to nothing.

Writing as well as reading had its difficulties. We use a fine brush, with which we draw or paint the letters, and we carry that, a stick of Indian ink, a roll of mulberry-leaf paper, vermilion and seal, in our sleeves, or in bags hung to the girdle; grown-up people carry, too, a tiny pipe and tobacco-pouch. We have first to draw letters, then words, then phrases. I found it easier to draw than

to write ; no more exertion was required, and it was so much more interesting to draw a little red monkey, looking through the leaves of a bamboo tree, or a great butterfly perched on the feathery summit, than to toil over the minute and beautiful, but to me often unmeaning, characters of the learned alphabet.

We write from top to bottom of the page, word under word, and from right to left, *i.e.* the first column is on the right-hand edge of the page, the next close to it, and so on. Our books are usually bound in limp covers of cloth or silk. In doing sums, we use our fingers, or rows of beads set in a frame, and seldom or never do them *only* "in our heads."

On the fifth day of the fifth month was the "Feast of Flags," the boys' great holiday, when my uncle bought me a set of toys representing a Daimio's procession, the Genii of strength and valour, and other toys to add to those my parents had bought for me at my birth, of

warriors, heroes, soldiers, flags, &c. Outside most houses possessing one of us (boys), a large hollow paper fish (the carp), sometimes thirty feet long, is hung to a pole on "Flag Day." As the wind rises and it gets filled with air, the tails and fins flap, as if it wanted to swim. The carp, which swims against stream, signifies the difficulties boys will have to encounter, and the determination they must show in overcoming them.

My uncle also gave me a large kite made like a dragon, which with whalebone stretched across it made a strange humming in the air. I dipped its string in glue at the top and powdered glass below, and then fought other boys with similar kites; running along, we tried to make our string cut through those of our neighbours, and when we succeeded, and a kite fell to the ground, it became the victor's. When I got older, I ran these races on stilts.

Years ago kites were made large



JAPANESE MUSIC.

Photo : T. Enami, Japan.



*Photo
A. M. L. L. L.
Yokohama*

JAPANESE BOYS SAILING TOY-BOATS.

enough to carry a man up into the air, and were used to spy out the interior of an enemy's castle. Once a robber ascended by one on a windy night to the tower of a castle, and tried to steal therefrom an immense copper fish covered with gold scales. He was caught and cruelly killed, and since then it is forbidden to make such large kites.

We also spun our tops against one another, and in the afternoon we had a grand game, called the "Genji and Heiké" (after two famous and rival clans), in our quarter, which was quite a sham battle : the boys were divided into two sides, one with red, and one with white flags, and the side which could take most flags from the other conquered.

My sister's gala day, "The Feast of Dolls," had been celebrated on the third day of the third month, when she and her companions played with the wooden and enamelled clay images which had been

bought for or had descended to her, of the Mikado and his wife, the court lords and ladies, &c. These dolls are placed on shelves, and the girls play at being at court, and present offerings of rice, fruit, and wine to these exalted and splendidly dressed little personages. A life-sized baby-doll with its head shaved was Hana's ambition, but she had to wait till the next year, when I carried her one from our good uncle. All children delight in putting on masks, and we have a great many different kinds with which we play. Girls, too, in winter have their gentler outdoor games—battledore and shuttlecock, sometimes played in circles, for which they put on their prettiest dresses, and paint and powder, and arch their eyebrows. They sing a song that the wind may be still and not hinder their game; while their brothers sing to raise the wind, and help their game. But the wind impartially attends to neither, and does as it wills, whether they

like it or not. The girls who are beaten in the game have their faces inked.

But I cannot tell you half our games. Oh, Nelly, you had certainly better come over here before it is too late. There never was, out of fairyland, such a place for children's good times as Japan. Story-books—have we story-books? I should think so, but I can't stop to tell you about them; many have, however, since been translated and put into English books.

Sometimes in summer nights old and young met in some wide space or street and danced in a circle, slowly moving round with clapping hands, keeping on till daybreak, the next day being almost slept away.

CHAPTER V.

RANKS AND RELIGIONS.

THE city of Yedo was divided into wards, with gateways closed at night and kept by warders who questioned suspicious-looking persons before letting them enter. Each ward consisted of so many families, all of whom were responsible for any disorder in their own ward. The head of every house was bound to inscribe outside it his name, occupation, the number and ages of his family and servants, and the other things which your Government has to find out from you reticent people by employing a little army of men to "take the census." The shops made little show; they were open to the street, and the shopkeeper would bow politely when you entered, and begin to chat, and invite you to light your pipe at the



Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

SHOE-REPAIRER.

brazier; and, if you wanted to make a considerable purchase, would also offer you some tea. It was all leisurely done, for the really beautiful things he had to sell were hidden away in boxes and silver paper, and took some time to get at. As you went along you could see every one at his trade or art, and the women within at their toilets or household work. Some streets were devoted to but one trade, such as cabinets, screens, dyers' shops, bamboo-poles, &c. Carpenters make our shoes, and basket-makers our hats; and you would see the blacksmith pulling the bellows with his foot, the cooper holding his tub with his toes, the tailor sewing *from* him, and the sawyer pulling the saw *to* him, and many ways of doing things which would seem to you "upside down" if you walked through our streets and watched the people at work.

My uncle's house was near the court, and to pass through these scenes of

cheerful bustle and polite bargaining, and to leave behind you the street-cries, the performing monkey's chatter, the juggler's drum and fife, the shrill-voiced singer and her lute, the fortune-teller's gabble, and the story-teller's hoarse rhetoric, for the silent solitudes of the "court quarter" was a change indeed. And then, again, to enter at one of the postern gates of some castle, and be at once surrounded by a kind of martial tumult, was as exciting as the city life outside.

But, Nelly, I am sure you want to interrupt, and ask what do I mean by "castles" and "court quarters," and where did the "Mikado" live, &c. &c.

I must tell you shortly. Long ago our Mikados ruled over a portion only of Japan. Gradually, however, they conquered the rest. But it was hard to keep their half-savage subjects in order ; so they sent generals to different parts, and rewarded them for their services in enforcing

obedience by giving them great possessions and power. These generals were called Shoguns. One of them secured the chief power to himself, and came to be *the* Shogun, a kind of military chief of Japan, who kept order while the Mikado "enjoyed himself," and the other military chiefs became his vassals. It was like the feudal system you read of in early European history. The empire was partitioned between so many clans, headed by their chief, the *Daimio*, or baronial lord. The retainers of the chief lived at his expense, and in return did his bidding. The daimio was supreme in his own province, and sometimes coined money, made bye-laws, and inflicted punishments. Long after the country was settled, the feudal system remained, and consequently it became mischievous instead of useful.

These military vassals despised all peaceful employments but those of the priest and scholar, and having little else

to do were always quarrelling, one clan with another, or rebelling against the Shogun, marching into each other's territories and laying them waste, and carrying on blood feuds from generation to generation. Read Sir Walter Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather," Nelly, if you want to understand a little about *us*. The Shogun was appointed by the Mikado, generally from one clan; but in 1598 one of the greatest daimios then, Tokugawa Iyeyasu, founded the Shogunate, and it has remained in his family ever since. The Tokugawa clan was settled in and about Yedo. Iyeyasu, the first Shogun, placed his sons and friends over as many provinces as he could, and so arranged as to place a friendly clan between any two that were at enmity with him, as you have seen at Sunday school two naughty children separated by two or three good ones, and so put out of speaking distance with one another. He made a law that every daimio should

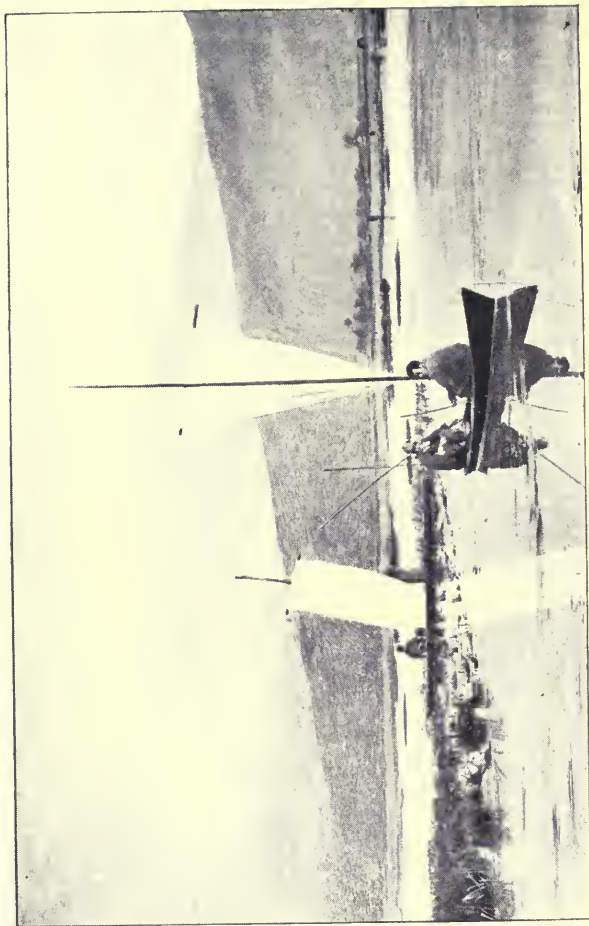


Photo : S. Kajima, Sutherland Avenue, N.W.

FUJI AND KASHIWABARA LAKE.

come to pay the Shogun homage at Yedo, his own chief city, once a year; and not only that, but should spend six months of the year at Yedo, which thus came to be the military or feudal capital of the empire. Thus he kept them under inspection, and could check their conspiracies against himself, and their mutual feuds. This accounts for the greatness and extent of Yedo, and the many castellated and moated buildings you would see there. The court quarter, four or five miles in extent, contained first and chief the great castle of Yedo—where the Shogun lived and held his court—surrounded by miles of streets, with the daimios' town houses and court-yards—"yashikis"—on either side. No daimio entered another's yashiki ("spread-out house"), and no retainer of one clan was admitted within the gates of any other, however hospitably he might be entertained on neutral ground. At the entrance of the Shogun's citadel the

greatest noble was obliged to dismount from horse or *norimono* and walk. When a daimio set forth to pay a ceremonious visit to his feudal lord the Shogun (and but for such solemn occasions, or for war, or for returning to their own baronies, the daimios were rarely seen beyond their castle gates), the stately procession left the courtyard with spear-men leading the way, immediately followed by the standard-bearer with his banner blazoned with his leader's crest, troopers and their horses in chain armour, infantry leading horses laden with changes of garments, dishes, &c., without which it was not etiquette for so great a man to stir out; and in the centre of all the daimio himself reposing in his splendid gold-blazoned *norimono*. The people scattered like sheep from his path by the foot-runners, lined the way with heads in the dust till the great man had passed; while at each ward-gate the keeper rushed out and struck his halberd, hung with iron

rings which rattled noisily, on the ground as a military salute, each warder being responsible for the great lord's safety till the next ward was reached. Then the ward-gates were shut again, and the watchman drowsed away once more.

But when the Shogun went forth the people were bidden to keep their houses, and, as to prostrating, they were expected to throw themselves to earth at sight of the very plates and dishes belonging to the Shogun!

The daimios who *submitted* to it did not therefore like the yoke of the Shogun. Many were of higher rank and of larger possessions than the head of the Tokugawas, but his influence was great over many clans that were proud to call the Tokugawas friends and allies, and glad to claim their protection. Sometimes a daimio, living far south or north, rebelled; and the edicts sent out by the Shogun's Government could never be and never were enforced in some of those great

distant provinces if their rulers were unwilling to carry them out. Many nobles were jealous of the Shogun's power, and looked back to the good old days when their Mikado, Heir of the Sun, was not only the Fountain of Honour, but of Power.

I must now tell you where the Mikado lived, what he did, and who the samurai were.

The Mikado lived in Kioto, "the capital"—hence called and considered a sacred city—in a palace unfortified, and simpler than many a noble's house, surrounded by the court nobles, or kugé, also in simple, unostentatious dwellings, with a mere plaster wall round the whole. Behind the palace was a park with a smaller palace in which he could be still more retired from the world.

The kugé were descendants of the Mikados and their many wives, and formed the Mikado's court. However poor they might be, they ranked higher



JAPANESE JIN-RIKI-SHA.

in all men's esteem than the most powerful daimios who could not boast of royal descent, or had no office at the Mikado's court, or title given by the Mikado.

Then came the daimios, or baronial nobles, chiefs of clans, holding their lands and titles from the Shoguns. These were generally of royal descent originally, but sometimes they were not even noble. There were about fifty great clans, and two hundred or more lesser ones.

Then came the hatamoto, the immediate retainers of Shogun, a class similar to your "knights" of the Middle Ages, who each had from three to thirty retainers, and were of good family and generally descended from famous soldiers. There were about eighty thousand of these, and they held most of the civil and military offices, especially in Yedo.

Then came "esquires" (in your old-fashioned sense), and then military retainers; and all these military classes

collectively were called the Samurai. All were reckoned as "gentlemen"; and from these, as a rule, came the learned men, the Shinto priests, the teachers and authors. They formed the military or "gentle" caste, and a great gulf divided them from the rest of our people.

Next came the farmers, then carpenters and artizans; then merchants and traders, all roughly classed together as "the common people." Below these were actors, and public singers, &c.; and lastly, the *eta* (tanners, skinners, gravediggers, &c.), and the *hinin* (not human), the poorest class of beggars, who built huts along the road and lived by alms.

Neither of these two classes, the *eta* or the *hinin*, were permitted to enter an ordinary house—to eat or drink, cook or sit at the same fire with other persons.

Buddhism forbids the killing of

animals; and all whose business is mixed up with that are considered polluted; hence, in part, the feeling about these unfortunate beings.

Now do you know who the samurai were? They were the privileged class in Japan; they did no work and had no business; paid no taxes, but (according to rank) were paid more or less by Government or their chief. Some were priests, and others became scholars, physicians, and teachers, but most devoted themselves to the arts of arms and to keeping guard at their master's castle gate, walking in his retinue, and wearing the ceremonial dress on great occasions. Roughly speaking, there were three millions of these to thirty millions of common people. Sometimes a peasant overcame the obstacles of birth, and rose to honour among the samurai, or even became, like the Taiko Sama whom I mentioned, a great general; but usually the peasant stayed as he was, and worked for the

support of the idle armed multitude of his betters.

As to the two swords, well, every samurai of any distinction had the right of wearing two swords; some people in small offices only wore one, but the plebeian proper might not wear any.

For this state of things *the feudal system* was responsible. War was held in high esteem, and only those who belonged to the profession of arms, by degree if not in practice, were respected; the priesthood, especially the Shinto, shared this respect; for the Mikado was, in a sense, the medium between gods and men, and his palace a temple, and hence reflected honour fell on the servants of that religion which is almost one with loyalty in Japan. Learning, too, has always been revered by us; but it also, as Hana said, was the privilege of the samurai, and was virtually forbidden to the rest of us.



Photo : W. H. Rau,
Philadelphia, 1893.

PREPARING A MEAL IN THE KITCHEN.

So, Nelly, you mustn't let Bob call me an "awful snob" for hankering as I did "to be a samurai and wear two swords." You don't know how *shut down* the life of our class used to be, and how the entrance into the samurai class meant an opening into life in its noblest aspect.

A Japanese farmer or merchant had little scope for patriotism. He could serve his country neither in arms nor in literature. So to be a samurai opened my way to that which I loved best of all, the study of our history and literature. Besides, it gave me, child as I was, a feeling of independence and self-respect, which was hard to maintain while, as a farmer's little son, half my time on a walk went in prostrations to the military men I met.

My uncle was a member of the great Satsuma clan in the South of Japan, and wore their crest, which now became mine.

He and my mother had been left orphaned early and in deep poverty, hence my mother's marriage "beneath her," to my father. It was, strictly, illegal for her to marry out of her caste. She had seemingly no relations but Darémo, and was too poor and friendless for anyone to call her to account. She was a happy and good wife to my father, and her gentle birth was rather concealed than boasted of, for reasons I shall tell presently. My uncle was not attached to any yashiki, but worked independently for his customers. Often, of course, he had occasion to go to the court quarter, and I delightedly accompanied him.

Most yashikis (daimios' town-houses, you remember, Nelly) were built in the form of a hollow square, enclosing gardens, pleasure grounds, and courts for martial exercises. The walls were built on a massive stone foundation, faced with lozenge-shaped tiles ridged with

white plaster, and lighted by rows of wooden-barred windows. The great gate in the centre was for the lord of the castle and other privileged persons; all others entered at the postern. Scarcely any one but the daimio might be admitted in a vehicle of any kind. The daimio and his chief officers lived in the centre buildings of this continuous house, and the lesser buildings were occupied by the retainers and servants; or else a wall only was erected around the whole enclosure, and the chief's house was in the centre of the square, approached by grand porticos and corridors.

Great nobles had three yashikis, for the superior, middle, and inferior grades of the clan, and some had other town-houses in other cities besides Yedo. Moats with running water surrounded the interior buildings. Thousands of waterfowl—storks, herons, and swans, found food and an undisturbed home in

their waters and on their steep embankments, while lotus flowers covered the shallow waters in summer. An immensely thick wall surrounded the Shogun's castle; within was the moat, crossed by drawbridges, and flowing round turfed embankments, and which, on the inner side, surrounded another wall, with strong terrible towers at each angle, through whose narrow-slitted windows archers could let fly at suspected strangers. Within was the castle proper, with a vast courtyard and innumerable buildings for retainers; and behind were the pleasure-grounds and parks, and summer dwelling-houses, where sometimes the Shogun and his court would repair, leaving the gloomy castle with its noisy guards.

Then the ladies of the household wandered over bridges into quaint gardens and sweet-blossomed orchards, while the mail-clad knights and squires trained themselves for war by mimic

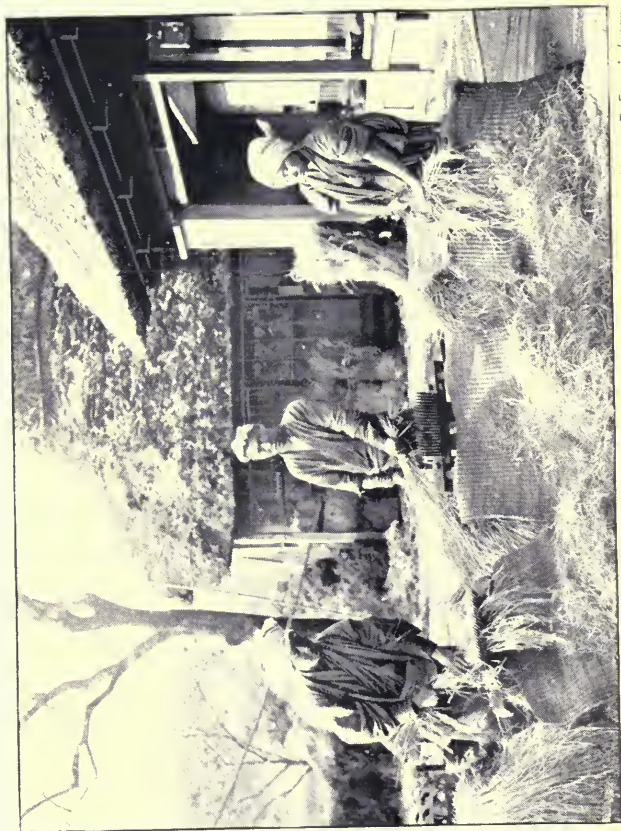


Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

PREPARING RICE FOR PACKING.

fight, single combats, and wrestling matches. Sometimes a tournament would be held. Masked, helmeted, and mail-clad warriors divided into two parties, distinguished by the different colours of standard-bearers, who wore their colours on their helmets in monstrous nodding plumes. The gorgeously dressed herald blew a long, melancholy, but musical note from a sea-shell, whereupon each side, distinguished by streaming ribbons of red or white, advanced, and, led by their chief, saluted their opponents with stately gravity, before rushing upon each other in good earnest, using, however, wooden swords in place of the sharp steel ones that usually hang at their girdle.

“Tournaments, single combats, mail-clad warriors, bowmen, castles with moats, and drawbridges!—aren’t you *making up*?” I think I hear you say, Nelly. “You’re talking about *Japan*, and that’s what we read about in ‘*Ivanhoe*,’ and

‘Kenilworth,’ and ‘Quentin Durward,’ as occurring in *England and France*, you know, in the Middle Ages.”

Yes, Nelly, and in Japan, when I was eight years old, we too lived in the Middle Ages. But we don’t now.

“But religion? Our forefathers were Roman Catholics, and you are——? Japan couldn’t have looked like England or France in the Middle Ages; there were no churches, or monasteries, or anything like that!”

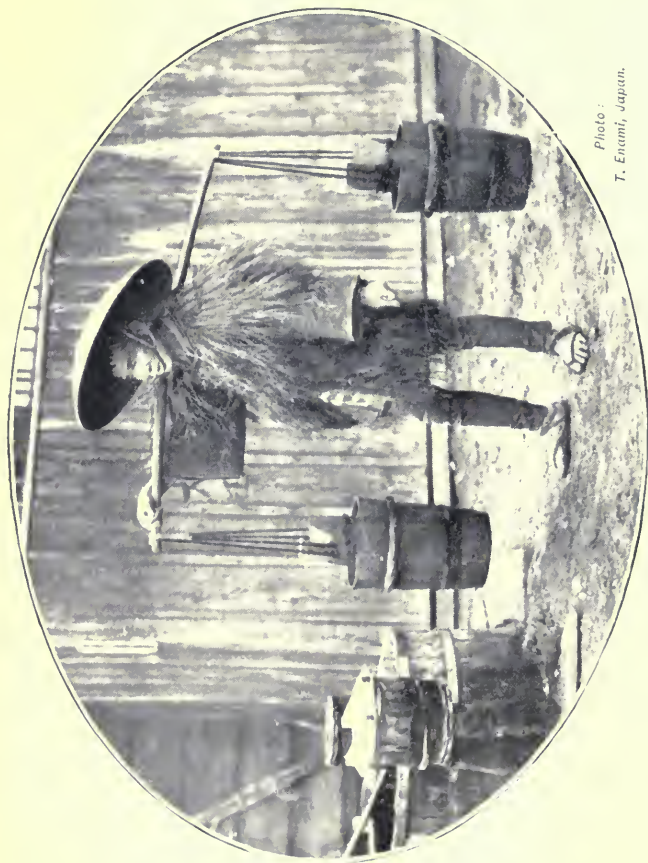
Were there not?

The likeness of Buddhist forms of worship to that of Rome is so extraordinary and striking as to have been, and still be, a mystery which no one can explain, for it seems as if it could not be purely accidental. We had, and have still, monks by tens of thousands, and nuns by thousands—abbeys, monasteries, and nunneries; our sacred books and liturgies were in a strange tongue; we had daily service, intoned—rosaries,

reliquaries, images, blessed bells, incense, holy water, altars with lighted candles and flowers, church bells which were solemnly consecrated, shrines of miracle-working saints, to which pilgrimage was made; priests with vestments and offerings; eloquent preachers and great congregations; hermits and penitents; while penance, abstinence and fasting, meditation and prayer, and intercessory prayers for the dead, were all known and practised.

Besides this, the Roman Catholic side of Buddhism, we have a great sect, one of the two chief among many, which represents Protestantism almost as forcibly. This sect permits priests to marry, and discourages penance, pilgrimages, fasting, ascetic diet, and the use of amulets and relics, commanding its followers rather to "trust in Buddha himself as the worker of perfect righteousness, to pray earnestly, and live a pure and devoted life"; and its books and prayers

are in the common Japanese, understood by all the people. They are zealous in spreading their religion among the masses, building temples in the most crowded parts of towns, and paying great attention to teaching and preaching, and comparatively little to ritual and ornamentation. Their rivals have said that "they are so much like Christians, they had better be Christians out and out." There is preaching at stated times in the temples of both sects when the priests are earnest and devoted, besides the daily service, at which prayers are chanted and the shrine of the tutelary saint is thrown open. The temple of Asakusa, the only one I have had space to describe at all, is not a fair specimen of all; it is the people's temple, and, though large and splendid, is dirty, and ill served by indolent money-loving priests, who provide shows for the people in order to fill the treasury, and care little for their moral and religious



*Photo :
T. Enami, Japan.*

WATER-CARRIER.

instruction ; but in many temples, the service and the duties connected with the establishment are carefully attended to. You will see within the screen which in large churches encloses about half the area from the "laity," a high altar (in the centre of which is the incense-burner with vases of flowers and bronze candlesticks on either side) fronting standing figures of Buddha with a glory round his head, or other images. Shaven priests, clad in vestments of violet and amber satin, minister at the altar ; and the dim religious light falls upon many earnest worshippers, who pay a trifling fee to enter the chancel, where they can pray in quiet, or kneel before some special shrine. When preaching, the speaker stands, leaning against a table, or sits upon a raised platform with violet silk thrown over it. The congregation sit as usual on the matting, having left clogs or sandals and umbrellas in the porch. They listen attentively, but smoke at the

same time; and if the preacher says something clever or witty, they murmur assent, or even laugh aloud. If his discourse is long, he breaks off for a rest in about twenty minutes; and then there is a buzz of chat and movement among the people, while other priests intone prayers till he resumes.

We have a proverb that "It takes a clever man to preach a short sermon"; and the sermons are often only superstitious tales of their deities, and sacred animals and the like; but *not always*. An earnest preacher will choose subjects of real importance.

One such preacher I often heard at Shiba (in Yedo). Clad in white silken vestments and purple hood, with an expression of dignity, intelligence, and kindness, his appearance inspired both veneration and affection. Reverently preparing himself by prayer for his sermon, he would begin with low and grave utterance, which gradually became

impassioned and rapid, as he pointed out the excellence of humility, self-abnegation, sincerity, temperance, and kindness, cheerfulness and charity; illustrating all he said by the example of Buddha or some saint. His words, so sincere and heartfelt, touched the springs of good desire and resolution in ourselves. We listened breathless, with an occasional murmur of conviction, and when he ceased with the words "Namu Amida Butsu" (Eternal Buddha, save!), the sound of the worshippers' hushed voices in response, as they bowed to earth like a wind-swayed cornfield, was like low-muttering thunder. Then our fixed attention was relaxed for a few instants, till the priest, bowing to the altar in passing, again took his seat. Again we prayed "Eternal Buddha, save!" and again the preacher reasoned with us of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, warning us of the terrors of the law—the hells that await, according to

Buddha, the unbelieving and unrighteous. The pious priests of Buddha helped by their teaching of the younger, and preaching to the elder, to keep alive the spark of divine life—to remind us of the facts which our worship symbolised, and to save us from altogether sinking into gross idolatry.

In order to prevent mistakes in the repetition of the Buddhist prayers, we often called in a bonze, or priest, to assist us. Then, instead of telling our beads separately, we turned the repetition of the rosary into an act of family worship, at which all knelt in a circle, holding the large rosary which the priest had brought. Led by his voice and gestures, bell and hammer, as he too knelt, alone, in front of the family "god-shelf," we chanted our loudest and best; and when at length the rite was finished, and we ceased, exhausted, we rested happily in the thought that the favourable intercession of the gods on

our behalf had been secured for some time to come.

But superstitious as we are, another proverb in common use, "To make an image is not to put a soul into it," shows that we are not all or altogether idolaters. The monks and nuns are very various in character, some devoted and fervent, many insincere and corrupt, but most indolent and worldly.

In the early times of Buddhism among us there was a great longing among its converts to devote themselves to contemplation, and reach the state of indifference Buddha preached; and many a Mikado, after a year or two's reign, abdicated, that he might enter the cloister; many a widowed empress and many a noble lady became a nun; many a warlike baron has founded or endowed an abbey; and when tired of governing unruly followers, or fighting with rivals, has appointed his successor, and sought a peaceful home, and a

resting-place after death, among the monks. The tombs of these great men are the chief sight of many temples, as their offerings are the chief source of their splendour—for instance, the golden gutter which ran round one famous Shinto temple to receive the droppings of the sanctuary. Such a gift will show you how highly the temple was venerated when the least important parts of it were thus magnificently planned.

Some monasteries in the Middle Ages became the centres of sedition and misrule; and fighting abbots fortified their abbeys, and led forth their brethren for whichever feudal lord's cause they espoused. These abbeys were, however, sacked and destroyed by an enemy to the monastic order, and have not since been allowed to be so fortified.

But the monasteries and nunneries, like those of Europe, were often a refuge



Photo : W. H. Rau,
Philadelphia, 1893.

TEA-HOUSE GIRLS.

for peace-loving people and for unprotected women, and the arts of quiet industry flourished within their walls. Some monks were painstaking transcribers of manuscripts, and many are the monkish chroniclers, artists, and students to whom we owe much for the memorials of old Japan they have made and preserved for us.

We have no sacrifices, although the Ainos—an aboriginal tribe in the north of Japan who represent our native ancestors* before they were conquered and mingled with the conquerors—preserve one relic of an ancient superstition in the Feast of the Bear. They capture a bear-cub, and rear it till it is two years old. Then it is brought to the village green in a cage, and baited, till, goaded to madness, it is let loose and rushes upon the people. Every one then

* Some Europeans think that the Aino race is quite distinct from ours—possibly the degenerate remnant of a European tribe.

tries to wound it, and when slain its flesh is divided and eaten, for it is believed that whoever wounds it will become strong and brave, and that those who eat of its flesh will be endued with its protection, now that it has become a kami, or tutelary spirit. Foxes, too, are worshipped (but not killed), both for themselves and as the divine messenger of Inari, one of the deities of Japan, who is said to have discovered the rice-plant. In the Asakusa grounds there is a little temple full of gilded foxes, to which offerings of rice and sugar foxes are made ; but in some places real foxes are preserved, and offerings of wine (saké) are poured down into their holes by anxious pilgrims. Thus we endeavour to please beings, real or imaginary (and we have a whole mythology of imaginary creatures—dragons, griffins, &c.), which are supposed to have the power or will to harm. Even in this we are not so unlike

Europeans as you might think. In your old Christian churches you will see among beautiful carvings and statues some goblin face grinning from a spout or peeping over a doorway. The un-trustful terrors of men are embodied much alike in all countries—those that know of little cause for trust naturally fall easily under the influence of terror, and it shapes their imaginations. Only the knowledge of an unseen *protecting* power—a Father—can save us from dread of unseen and *harmful* powers.

One of our mythical animals, the Shojo, represented as red-haired and red-eyed and as drinking saké, is what our little children take a fair European or American for; you will see them run away in terror, “because the Shojo has come.” The rum-drinking English sailors have too much likeness in their wild fits of drunkenness to this Japanese bogey; and many a simple Japanese supposes them to be not really human,

but red-haired dragons with a likeness to men.

It has been a blessing to Japan that the religions which have swayed its people have not been cruel, nor so debasing as many. Buddhism forbids the taking of life, and Shintoism does not require it. If it had been otherwise, if with all our intense terrors and superstitions we had thought it necessary to propitiate by *sacrifice* the beings we dread so much, ours would have been a history written in blood, like that of so many heathen nations.

Even Shintoism is but the expression of the fears of the people themselves, and not a means of terrifying them invented by the priesthood. As a rule our priests are neither cruel nor despotic. In part this is because they are not so separate from the community as to form a caste, and, if Shinto, their priesthood is no hindrance to the performance of other duties.

CHAPTER VI.

TALES OF MY ANCESTORS.

I HAD not been long with my uncle before he gave me for myself two swords suitable to my age, richly embossed and put in red lacquered scabbards. My dress, too, was much improved ; instead of the blue tunic, which was the only garment of the farmer's little son on ordinary occasions, I had a tunic of a washing crape, Turkish-looking trousers fastened at the knee, long cloth hose, and sandals or clogs, and sometimes socks, with an outer tunic or long coat with the Satsuma crest, a black cross within a circle (that is, a horse's bit-ring) upon it. My uncle was a kind but somewhat reserved man, a shrewd talker but a better listener, from which you may conclude, Nelly, that he was a wise man. His forge was a

favourite resort, as forges always are, for men and children. Who has not stayed to watch the furnace glowing through the darkness of the grimy smithy, the hammer striking sparks from the anvil, and the strong men who seem to play with the fire and the glowing iron, and whose mighty strokes fall on the ear like the beats of some great clock? And as Darémo had a reputation for goodwill, good counsel, and a silent tongue, his shop was doubly attractive. How glad and proud I was to be called his adopted son! How overjoyed when I hung the swords to my belt—when, on entering a house, I placed the larger one in the sword-rack, and when at night I carried my lantern with the Satsuma crest beside his through the crowded streets, and watched to see if there were others like ours in the crowd! Of course his customers were all samurai, so I had full opportunity of gratifying my taste for good society, and, like a child, I

thought every one a hero who swaggered about telling stories of his own bravery. When sometimes a "rōnin" came in I was a little frightened, for the rōnins are outlawed samurai; that is, they belong to no clan, and wander about like the "mercenaries" you read of in "Quentin Durward." Often they are outlawed for debt, or crime, and become highway-men, and worse—desperadoes whom all fear and shun. Sometimes they outlaw themselves for a good reason, sometimes they are really what by their dress they assume to be, *penitents* going on a pilgrimage. Their basket hats or mufflers conceal their faces completely, and in this disguise they look formidable enough, and their swaggering, insolent manners justify their looks. The rōnin, you see, might, and often did, injure the plebeian almost with impunity; while if an unfortunate peasant dared to resent an insult or a blow from these braggarts he might pay for his impertinence with his life,

and no one would interfere, unless indeed one of the Otokodaté were at hand. The Otokodaté were gallant plebeians, who, indignant at the oppressions of the military caste, formed themselves into a guild for the protection of their fellows ; and many a widow and orphan, many a peaceable merchant and toiling peasant, did they rescue from the violence, extortion, and insult of the samurai.

Scattered over Japan, these Otokodaté were bound together by vows, to succour "each other in sickness or peril, always to speak the truth and keep a promise, and never to be guilty of cowardice or meanness." The Government suffered the Otokodaté to redress wrongs which itself could neither prevent nor punish effectually so long as each daimio had supreme power over his own clan, and the clan was a collection of idle soldiers who thought themselves lords of the universe.

Had I been older when I chose to



Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

RICE-PACKING.

be a samurai I should perhaps have thrown my lot in with these defenders of the people instead; but loyalty, and the thought of being a "soldier and a poet," had taken possession of my child's heart, and the calling of a samurai seemed the only worthy one.

I heard strange talk among those that gathered round the forge to watch Darémo beating out the embossed hilts, or graving landscapes, birds, or dragons on the blade inlaid with gold and silver. His was an art rather than a trade. A good sword was so highly esteemed, that religious rites sometimes accompanied its forging, and a samurai would go with scanty food and poor clothing rather than be without a finely tempered and ornamented sword to do him honour as a gentleman and a soldier, for, as the proverb engraved on many a blade says, "The girded sword is the soul of the samurai."

The talk was of troubles impending,

especially of the foreigners, who insisted (again) on coming up the bay of Yedo in their strange and fearful ships, and wanted to be allowed to trade with us. Almost all were agreed that our happiness and prosperity would be lost if the barbarians were admitted. But it was said to be impossible to keep them out; and ere long we saw for ourselves one of the vessels anchored in our bay, and heard that foreigners were permitted to live at Yokohama close to Kanagawa, and other ports. Most people were angry with the Shogun for this; but those who knew best said he would have prevented it if he could, but there was no standing against these barbarians with their fire-ships and other magic arts. "Are they Christians, uncle?" I asked, after one of these conversations. "How I hate the Christians!" and so saying, I stooped down and put two pieces of wood crosswise, and stamped on them with an air and feeling of fury, which had been taught me from infancy.

To my intense surprise, my uncle was terribly angry with me; but he said little, only bade me be silent about Christians henceforth if I would be called his child. Time went on, and we saw these barbarians, strongly guarded by our soldiers, pass along our streets. They were often overbearing and ill-mannered, sometimes worse. Many rōnins vowed to assassinate every stranger; and they so far kept their word that the foreigners lived in fear of their lives, and murders were frequent. Some of the Shogun's ministers were murdered for their part in letting in the hated foreigners, and the Shogun himself was condemned severely for having signed treaties with the foreigners in his own name, as if *he* were the Emperor of Japan. This indeed your people took him to be, and naturally enough. As they saw nothing of our Mikado, but heard he was revered almost as a divinity, and as they did see and feel the power of the Shogun, they imagined

that we had two emperors: the one temporal, the other spiritual, and that they had nothing to do with the latter.

“But why did we hate foreigners and Christians, and why not let them in?” you may perhaps ask, Nelly.

It is much too long a story to tell here. The root of it was, that in 1542 the first Europeans landed in Japan, and some years after the famous Francis Xavier introduced Christianity among us. He received no opposition from Government; on the contrary, the Emperor, being appealed to by the “bonz” (Buddhist priests), who were against the new religion, replied, “How many religious sects are there now in Japan?” “Thirty-five,” was the answer. “Then one more may well be tolerated; let there be thirty-six henceforth.” Christianity in its Roman Catholic form spread rapidly among us; but its prosperity and influence were finally stopped by its association with political parties, by

divisions among the missionaries, and by the doctrine of the Pope's temporal supremacy, which struck at the Mikado's power. The daimios took one side or the other ; and *both sides persecuted bitterly*. A civil and religious war raged. The end was that the Buddhist side triumphed, after a terrible struggle. All missionaries were banished ; and the Christians, who had fortified their last stronghold near Nagasaki, were obliged to surrender. Then a terrible massacre began. Thirty-seven thousand Christians were slain, and thousands more hurled from the rock of Pappenberg, in the Nagasaki harbour, or tortured to death, or crucified. Every European was banished, save a few Dutchmen, kept under guard in a little island, who were allowed to trade with us ; and an edict already published was renewed against the "evil sect," commanding that "so long as the sun should shine, no Christian should enter Japan, nor Japanese leave it." No vessels might now be built

beyond a certain size, sufficient for trading along the coast, and no one might study European books. Even the Chinese—our natural friends and allies—were forbidden to enter the interior.

No martyrs for the Christian faith ever exceeded in constancy those of Japan; even the timid peasantry, inspired by a new hope, endured fearful tortures and lingering deaths with but few apostasies. A kind of inquisition was established to hunt out the Christian heresy, and the Buddhist priests reported yearly on their parishioners' orthodoxy. It seemed as if every trace of Christianity had been extirpated. Informers were highly paid for discovering a Christian; and suspected persons or whole villages were sometimes tested by being required to trample on the cross.

A board, inscribed with the edict against the "evil sect," together with commands against murder and other crimes, was erected at every cross road,

every village and town, and every entrance to the great cities. We were ignorant of the meaning of the word Christianity, but it was a name to us for "sorcery, sedition, and all evil"; and I, like other little children, had been taught by my father before I could read to repeat the inscription on the edict-board with that mixed feeling of fear and hate which is the child of ignorance and the parent of cruelty, and whose name is "superstition."

I had never dared to ask Darémo the meaning of his anger and of the words he asked, half unconsciously, "What meanest thou, child, to trample on that which thy ancestors——?" but there he stopped abruptly, bent his head, and seemed to forget me, and a troubled gloom settled on him for days after.

But I learnt in time. My uncle one day said to me, "Tell me, child, did thy *mother* teach thee to hate Christians?"

I hesitated, and then, disentangling my childish memories, remembered that *she* did not ; that she sat silent while my father told me hair-raising stories of the wicked Christians, and I said this.

“But, uncle, are they not wicked? And are not our gods the only right ones?” I asked.

“Child, I know not ; but I know that thy mother’s mother and mine died for being a Christian, and that *she* was not wicked, but a most patient and law-abiding woman. Moreover, thine ancestors have been from generation to generation Christians in faith and symbol ; and, if thou art not of them, forbear to curse, and *be silent*.”

I was filled with horror. And then my uncle went on to tell me that he and my mother were descended from one of the few Christian families that escaped extirpation in the times of persecution, and had, though noble, led an obscure and hidden life in a Satsuma village.

But that about thirty years previously there had been a fresh burst of persecution, and these poor villagers, who clung together in their harmless obscure lives, had been set upon by the "Christian Inquiry," searched, and tortured, to find traces of the "accursed sect," and that an informer had denounced my grandmother for having a book of Christian prayers in her possession. It was true; the book was a relic of her martyred ancestors, and was her precious possession.

She was young, and loved life; her husband was weak, and denied that he knew anything of her beliefs or of the sect called Christian. But as for her—"It is true! I pray to the Lord of heaven and earth, and ever will," cried the tortured woman; and then her persecutors said she had condemned herself as a traitor to her country and her religion, "for who is Lord of the earth but our Mikado, and who rules

heaven but his ancestors?" So they crucified her, and she died in patience, blessing her persecutors.

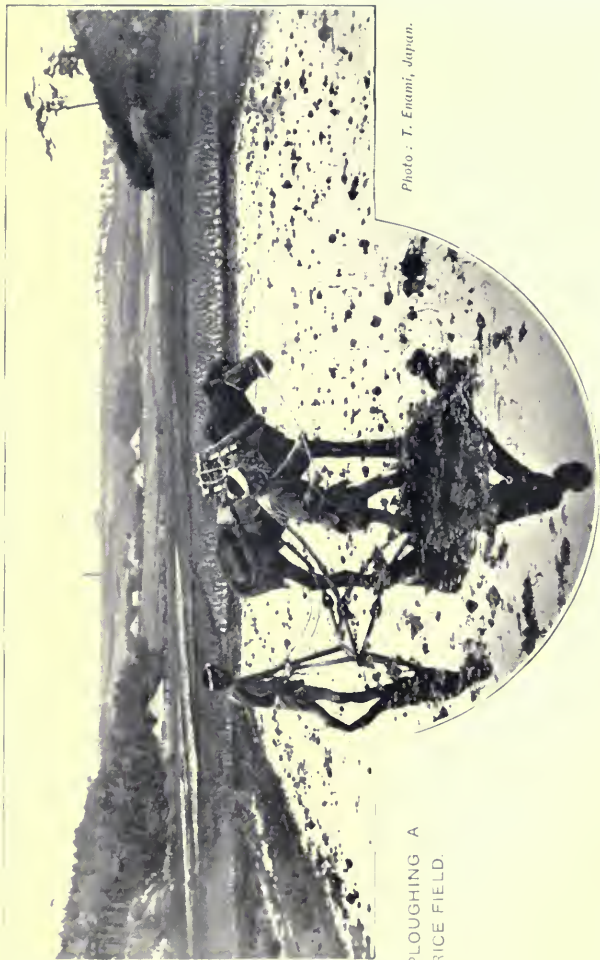
And her wretched husband, who could not imitate her constancy, fled with his little children, my uncle and mother; but the book which the martyr had carried in her bosom, and which had told her enough of Christ to live and die by in faith and patience, was burned in the fire which consumed her body after her cruel death.

My uncle's voice trembled as he spoke of his mother's fate—trembled with indignation as well as grief. "See, Kotarō, child as thou art, thou must learn to be silent about these things, lest again thou curse the memory of thy mother's mother.

"I know not how it may be. I have a rosary of hers, but that is but like our own. I am no Christian, but I am no maligner of my mother's faith; and if these foreigners should come and tell

Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

PLOUGHING A
RICE FIELD.



us of it, I for one should rejoice to know more, and I would that these persecutions of Christian and barbarian might for ever cease. Now, swear silence, Kotarō." And I swore, not only in words but in writing, carefully worded, lest our secret should be discovered, "to be faithful in all things to my uncle's commands," sealing my oath with blood from the middle right-hand finger. There was no need to swear: terror of discovery had taken hold upon me. The very horror I had been taught, and now in part unlearnt, of Christians would have warned me, if I had not known it otherwise, of the terrible fate that would come upon us all if our ancestry were discovered.

Days, weeks, and years passed by. I never forgot, but I never spoke of what I had learnt, not even to my mother or Hana.

Hana and I met sometimes, like town and country mice, both with much

to hear and tell, and I, I am afraid, speaking in too much of the town-mouse's boastful strain. When I visited my home I saw with sorrow how poor it was, and how hard a struggle my parents had to "make both ends meet." The rice crops had been poor for several years, times were disturbed, and taxes heavier than usual. Most of the samurai did not work for their living, so the peasant and farmer had to work to supply their rulers with the means of keeping so many idle gentlemen. On the other hand, no peasant was expected or wished, much less forced, to enlist as a soldier. That was too great an honour for him; so, though we have had peasant warriors and even governors, they have been exceptions to the rule. And in the worst times of civil war the peasant has hoed and ploughed, sown and watered, unconscious of and indifferent to the convulsions above him, knowing them only by scarcity and exaction, oppression or

violence, but not taking any active part in them.

This was my poor father's case. The man and woman no longer helped in house and farm, but my father and mother and Hana worked hard to keep as much rice growing as before; and still they grew poorer. Look, Nelly, in your English History for accounts of exactions practised on the peasantry. Is the subject too dry for you? Well, never mind, the thing is alike all over the world. Country people in feudal times suffered from the quarrels of their betters, and were both oppressed and despised by those betters. Don't you think it must have been hard to toil and moil, and when harvest came to gather in a hundred bags of rice, and have to give the Government fifty of those bags, and your landlord twenty-five, and be left with just a fourth (or less, if an extra tax was laid on) of what you had raised on your land to live upon? That is how it was with

us. And when a bad season came then the Government was kind enough to feed the peasants, but none too well, from the stores it had amassed out of their labour.

Many a crime and many a suicide has come of these unjust exactions. Many a father has sold his little daughter into slavery, having no way of getting bread for her, and seeing no other means of releasing himself from debt. So you can see how good it was for us all that I should be my uncle's charge, and my poor parents thereby have one mouth less to feed. Yet how cheap and poor you would have thought their living—rice, and oil, and salt, and tea—everlasting tea—or saké, and fish, and roots, and seaweed. No butter or cheese or milk or animal food. If fish had not been abundant, and at hand, I scarcely know how they could have lived.

But my father's strength declined. The physician came; he burned the



SELLING NEW YEAR DECORATIONS.

Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

mokusa (a cone of a kind of herb) on the feet, and punctured the skin with fine hair-like silver needles in nine places, and gave strange medicines, but seemingly all in vain. I cannot tell you how many superstitions gathered round his last hours, and added to our grief and anxiety such horrors as are not known in Christian countries. Omens, that now seem too absurd for me ever to have believed, had weighed upon me when uncle and I went towards home, having been summoned by a "flying post." I had turned pale when the thong of my wooden clog broke behind, for that meant misfortune to me or mine; if in *front* it would have been to my enemies. I remembered that I had uttered the sound "shi," about some poem on New Year's Day ("shi" meaning "death" also, it is thought most unlucky to pronounce it on the first day of the year), and had laughed

when someone turned pale. But now Hana also told of omens, especially that she had broken her chopsticks (which, you may remember, are what we eat with), and that dogs had howled near the house, and that my father had put on his last new sandals after five in the evening!

My mother, too, remembered how, after my last letter had been received, they had made a feast of *red rice*, so coloured by boiling red beans with it, and called their friends together to hear of my prosperity; and how it had turned out a dirty red, which, being a sign of ill, had nearly turned their joy to grief. Now they knew why, and why the dog had howled for nights past.

So we went on, adding to our natural sadness by superstition, and giving up hope not so much because it was plain that my poor father's strength was exhausted, as because of

such signs and dreams as these. Yet, Nelly, you would wonder they could affect us so, if you knew how with our firm belief in ghosts and goblins is joined a system of inuring ourselves *not to mind them*, which is, you would think, a kill-or-cure way.

For this purpose the children have two games encouraged by their elders: in one, on winter nights boys and girls gather round the hibachi, while in a far-off dark room is placed a lamp (a dish of oil with a wick of many strands set in it). Someone tells the most frightful stories he can think of; and at the end of each story the children in turn leave the cheerful firelight and go alone to the dark room, and remove one of the strands of the wick. Thus the room gets darker and darker, and the last boy is prepared to see some dreadful face peering at him through the darkness.

The other way we have of torturing ourselves is to plant flags in some lonely graveyard in the day-time, and at night to meet and tell ghost stories till our hair is ready to stand on end, and *then* to go out one by one and bring home the flags.

But I am going far away from the sad tale I have just now to tell. My poor father died quietly in sleep a week after we arrived. He knew me, and spoke a little, commending my mother and sister to Darémo's and my care.

I will not sadden my little English sister with the tale of our grief. The priests came and lighted tapers, and watched with us beside our lost one ; and next day they gave us the posthumous name they had chosen for him ; and on the following day, about sunset, my mother and sister, clad in pure white mourning robes, and Darémo and I and our friends, with muffled swords and cere-

monial dress, followed him in his white coffin borne on men's shoulders to his last resting-place on the green hillside, first pausing at the temple, that prayers might be said over the body. Then after the last rites had been performed, the tapers lighted, incense burnt, and prayers offered up, we placed at his head the memorial tablet with the new name written on it, and then came sadly away to enter upon a new life, stranger to us than our strangest dreams could have foreshadowed.

CHAPTER VII.

COURT AND CAMP.

WE took my mother and Hana to live with us. I was now of age (fifteen), and should have been apprenticed; but, alas for my fickle nature! at fifteen I did not want to be a swordsmith. I could wrestle, and fence, and shoot with the bow, but I had neither taste nor talent for my uncle's business, and I thought that I was called by divine destiny not to make, but to use, the sword. I had studied well, and had written a great deal of poetry. My uncle and teachers read my verses with pride, and caused me to make copies of them to hand about among our friends. I began to be thought by others the genius I thought myself!

I had a deep and passionate enthu-

siasm for our Emperor, and longed to go to the sacred city where the Son of Heaven dwelt; and a sort of persuasion remained with me, that I was destined to serve the Mikado—if by laying down my life for his cause so much the better, I thought. I was happy in having my wish unexpectedly gratified. An officer, the same who had noticed me on my first journey to Yedo, and who had taken a fitful interest in the “ambitious little one” ever since, one day brought a court-noble to our workshop, who had travelled from Kioto on purpose to place a treasured heirloom in my uncle’s hands to repair. It was a Goliath-sword, six feet in length, the usual length being about two feet. While we admired and talked of it, the officer introduced me as a poet; and my uncle showed an illuminated copy of one of my ballads on the ancient glories of the Mikado, written in a figurative style, in praise of the chrysanthemum

(the Imperial crest), with a verse for each petal, and ending with a wish that the rays of the Rising Sun (the crest of "Great Japan") might be covered by the chrysanthemum petals—a clumsy symbolism which greatly delighted the noble!

He offered to take me back to Kioto for a few months, and I, overjoyed, went with him, feeling like a young knight-errant on his first adventure through the world. When I reached Kioto, the people and place seemed to me enchanted; and I thought of the Shogun as the sorcerer who kept them spell-bound. Without the palace gates were war and tumult, within was intrigue; but peace and pleasure seemed to lull the courtiers and their master into a slumberous state, in which "it was always afternoon." But I was too young and obscure to know of the forces at work around and within, which were even then breaking the magic sleep.

For the next few months my life, as I look back on it, seems to have been one long spring within and without. It was spring in my heart; and favouring circumstances made it blossom into joy, just as young plants grow strong and beautiful in the soft showers and warm sunlight of May. You must excuse these poetic bursts of mine, Nelly. I remember that you and your brothers used to call them "soft." That they may be; but it is as natural to a Japanese boy to feel and express these things, as to an English boy, if he feels them, to repress them.

My kind protector presented me to one of the learned Shinto priest nobles, as worthy of encouragement, and I became his reverent pupil.

I practised knightly games with the youths, and played chequers or chess with the young ladies of the court; and we all, young and old,

delighted in games of wit and poetry, improvisations and story-telling, for which there were prizes and hard-fought contests. At night there were stately court dances, and we often got up "pageants," at which we wore suitable masks and costumes for the characters represented. I, as one of the poets of the court, and as "great on history," had much to do with the planning of these, and I was assisted by the quick wit of one of the young ladies, who was as often victor as vanquished in our improvising and punning games. In the longer poetic contests I also often came off winner, since from my great love of our ancient legends I could make a hit at a subject while the others were casting about for theirs, and I had for some time been studying composition and verse-making. Story-telling, too, brought me into favour with many who first looked down on the boy my



DANCING-GIRLS GOING INTO
A TEA-HOUSE, KIOTO.

Photo T. Enin, Japan.

master had picked up—"no family, quite a wonder he has any manners at all."

I wrote, in fact, one or two tales and patriotic ballads, which were thought worthy of being laid at the Mikado's feet; and as he deigned to approve them, and to send me in token of his condescension a gold-mounted fan and jewelled sword-scabbard, I came into high favour at the court for a little while.

Kioto is a beautiful city, lying high amid green hills and mountains, near to lake Biwa, and surrounded by fair gardens, and clear rivers whose branches flow down some of the city streets. It is not so gloomily imposing as castellated Yedo, but is a bright, cheerful, sunny place of groves, temples, and palaces, squares and monasteries. The Mikado's palace (like his dress and surroundings) was distinguished by refined simplicity rather than pomp and

magnificence. And Kioto prided itself on taking the court tone in this and other particulars. As for the Mikado, it was thought that display was unbefitting one so great as to be far above the need of imposing on the world by it; while his courtiers, the kugé, like their master, were content to despise the "vulgar ostentation" of the daimios, which they could not imitate if they would, for they were often fearfully poor.* But they looked down with much satisfaction and scorn on all other classes, since no one but to the manner born *could* be a kugé; whereas, so perverse is fate and nature, that even a peasant has been known to become a daimio, and even a Shogun in all but title, merely because of inborn worth and talent, struggling

* I am writing of what is now past: *then* the Shogun and the daimios took most of the country's taxes, so that little was left the Mikado and his Court.



A FLOWER GARDEN.

Photo: T. Enami, Japan.

against and overcoming all caste obstacles.

The kugé and other gentlemen, when attending the court, wore an elaborate ceremonial dress of stiff starched silk crape over inner robes of satin, which stuck out like wings on either side the shoulders, and the folds of their long kilt flowed out behind for two or three yards so as to form two trains, one dangling from each foot. Creeping with (of course) unsandalled feet, they approached the "presence," falling on their faces at every step or two, and showing their veneration in every conceivable manner. The court ladies in attendance on the Emperor and Empress were distinguished by their trailing silken robes of white or coloured silk, and crimson sashes, their long black tresses streaming behind, and two black dots painted on the forehead. When not worn long, the hair of Kioto belles was raised high over the forehead, rolled back and fastened up with gold and

silver pins. Shoes of lacquer, gold-fringed sashes, sunshade, fan, everything that they wore, was more exquisite than other people's adornments.

The society of Kioto took after the court pattern, and was simple, refined, and charming. The ladies had an air and style which no one out of Kioto could equal. Learned men flocked to the capital, where there was leisure to enjoy their gifts; and all that was most chivalrous, gentle, and accomplished in manners and arts, was drawn to Kioto and found within it.

But, Nelly, do you think that when in Kioto, and a favourite at court, I ever once *saw* the Emperor whom I revered so much? No such thing. For hundreds of years the Mikado had never been seen by anyone but his wives and chief ministers. The *people* never even saw the screen or curtain that hid him from the general court. If he went outside the palace gates, it was in a closely curtained

litter drawn by bullocks; but that was rare. He lived his life in the palace and its gardens, or in the summer palace in the park behind, walled from human eyes, where an intruder would have met with instant death. His feet never touched the ground. Piled up mats made the imperial throne, and wherever he placed his feet contact with common earth or flooring was prevented by the anxious attendants. His name was so sacred that people of our station never pronounced it aloud or wrote it in full.

This was the unseen being to whom our loyalty clung.

It had not always been so; but at this time the Mikados had been for centuries the slaves and victims of their greatness—shut out by Eastern habits and the harem-life from healthy activity and contact with the world, till they lost the power to will, and were often little better than puppets in the hands of their female relations, their ministers, or courtiers.

A strange and sudden end came to my gay spring-time in Kioto; to the picnics to the blue lake Biwa, where we stayed in rustic summer houses and composed rhapsodies on the scenery; to the "chamber of inspiring view" in my chief's house (my favourite resort as a poet); to the tournament by day, and dances by night; to the songs and jests and laughter.

A flying post brought me one day a letter from Hana. To my dismay, it contained only a few hurried lines, entreating me to return instantly, as great trouble had befallen them. My uncle, having gone out one evening, and being expected home in about an hour, had then been three days absent, sending no letter or sign, and all search and enquiry had hitherto been fruitless. Of course I returned as quickly as possible, and found trouble worse than I had dreamt of awaiting me. With closed doors and in low whispers I was told that there was little hope that my uncle's disappearance



A GROUP OF DANCING GIRLS.

Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

could be accidental—that spies had been seen about the house for weeks, and that my mother and the neighbours thought it was certain that he had been seized in some lonely place when off his guard, and secretly imprisoned, or worse, by Government.

“Surely, when off his guard,” I answered, “or he would not have failed to perform hara-kiri rather than be taken living. But why imprisoned? what could *he* have done, who was so wise and just?”

The answer came falteringly, Hana turning paler: “We believe he has turned Christian.”

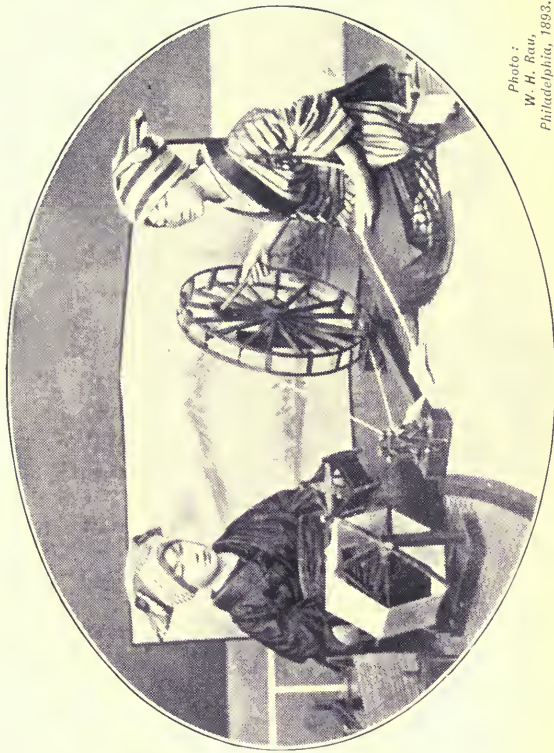
“A Christian!” I shouted, “then may the gods”—but I stopped in the act of calling down vengeance from the ancestral deities on the renegade who had deserted them—suddenly remembering the oath of long ago, my uncle’s past life, his longing to hear more of the sect everywhere spoken against, his mother’s martyrdom.

My mother, too, conscious of her Christian ancestry, of which she thought me ignorant, sat shrinking, as if I were appealing to the gods against her.

"Yes, a Christian," answered Hana, proceeding. "But, brother, all Christians are not alike; and they say that some are quite good people."

"They say? What knowest *thou*, Hana?"

"Oh, I know something," she replied; "for even in Kanagawa there are Christians and Christians; some so dreadful! we shut up our houses fast when we see them coming down the streets; but some quite kind and gentle and good, and these say, generally, that it is their being Christians which makes them so. But how that can be I know not, for the others, too, are very proud of being Christians, and call us ill names; yet they are, my uncle used to say, often worse than the worst of our people."



*Photo :
W. H. Rau,
Philadelphia, 1893.*

GIRLS SPINNING.

Then she stopped, half-frightened at the indignation she saw in my face, that she should have any good to say for those whom I hated so; but I commanded her to go on.

"Commanded!" Yes, Nelly, that was our way with women, but we are learning better now.

She went on to say how Darémo, who had been in a pleasure boat on the bay of Yedo one day, had brought home in his sleeve, all wet, a foreign book he had seen floating on the water, and picked up. It was written in Chinese, which he could understand, and turned out to be one of the Christians' sacred books, that one called the "New Testament." He read it eagerly, in every spare moment when he believed himself unobserved; and after a time it was noticed that he removed the god-shelf, and made no more offerings of fruit and rice to the images of Buddha, either at home or at the temples. He

told his friends that he had "found a treasure," but seemed reluctant to impart to them what he learnt, fearful of bringing them into trouble and danger, and not yet sure enough that his treasure was worth all cost to possess it. At Yokohama there had been some American teachers for several years, and he obtained a permit to go there, to show the foreign lords some rare swords, and then gained admission to the house of one of the Christian teachers. This teacher, more wise than he could have believed, he told my mother, told him wonderful things about the world outside Japan, and also instructed him in the meaning of what he read in the Christians' book. Our uncle was a man of strong will and simple uprightness. To change and seem unchanged, to believe and hide his belief, was impossible to him. On his return he spoke openly of his faith in the Christians' God, and of his desire to profess it in their

fashion, using the symbol of purification by water.

The next day—after he had thus spoken to one whom we all lightly esteemed, but who listened with apparent sympathy, praised his courage greatly, and, sighing, said how great an example of quite superhuman goodness he found in his friend Darémo—was the day of my uncle's disappearance. All of us believed that Darémo, already suspected, had sealed his fate by announcing his resolve to a false friend, who might too easily be a spy.

“What! a friend a spy! How could that be?” I think, Nelly, I hear you exclaim. Alas! too easily, Nelly. I have not said everything *bad* in my country's laws and customs I could think of. Time enough for you to hear of evil things and people (and evil is everywhere); and it is not the part of a patriot to dwell without cause upon his country's wrongs and weaknesses. But,

as I *have* told you, ours was a despotic government, and, under the Shogun, one of fear. Treachery always accompanies such modes of ruling. The people resist or evade the laws they hate; the rulers and their officials watch and spy to see who is breaking their laws, or evading their exactions. Even now, Nelly, when so much is altered for the better, and when our Government is one to which we all freely do homage, it is said that our rulers know pretty certainly the whereabouts of ninety-nine out of every hundred of its subjects *every day*.

No great noble even might visit another without his attendant (recognised) watcher or spy, to see that no treason was talked or planned. No two or three private persons might leave their own ward in a town or village without the consent of Government; and no edict board—which denounced such persons, together with *murderers, incen-*

diaries, thieves, and Christians—failed to add that a reward would be given to any one informing against the offenders.

Many of the spies were known, but many hid their real business under the cloak of some honourable calling, for the system was so universal of having spies of each class for their intimates in each class, that less shame attached to it than among other nations.

So you see, Nelly, we had reason for our distrust of a “friend,” a “gentleman, and a soldier” to boot, and for our terrible fears for Darémo. In time, confirmation came. The Government notified to us that my uncle had been arrested for belonging to the seditious sect (giving no clue to his place of prison or of exile), but permitted my mother and sister to inherit his property, as if he were dead. It gave me “permission,” which equalled a command, to return to Kioto, warning me that but for the protection of the court there,

my ballads against the Shogunate would have been punished as they deserved, and advising me not to return to the Shogun's city.

Stunned and bewildered by the loss of my uncle and by his conversion to Christianity, I feigned acquiescence in the Government decrees; but I determined on leaving Yedo sooner than the time allotted, and repairing, not to the gay court of Kioto, but to the home of my forefathers in the southern island, Kiushiu, and throwing myself upon the protection of the Satsuma chief whose crest I was permitted, as my uncle's adopted son, to wear. Just before the ward gate closed one night, I left my home, disguised as a rōnin. The watchman, who had known me from childhood, was easily persuaded to let me pass unmolested, and, once outside, I profited by my disguise, and acted up to the character of a swaggering rōnin. My two swords stuck out ostentatiously

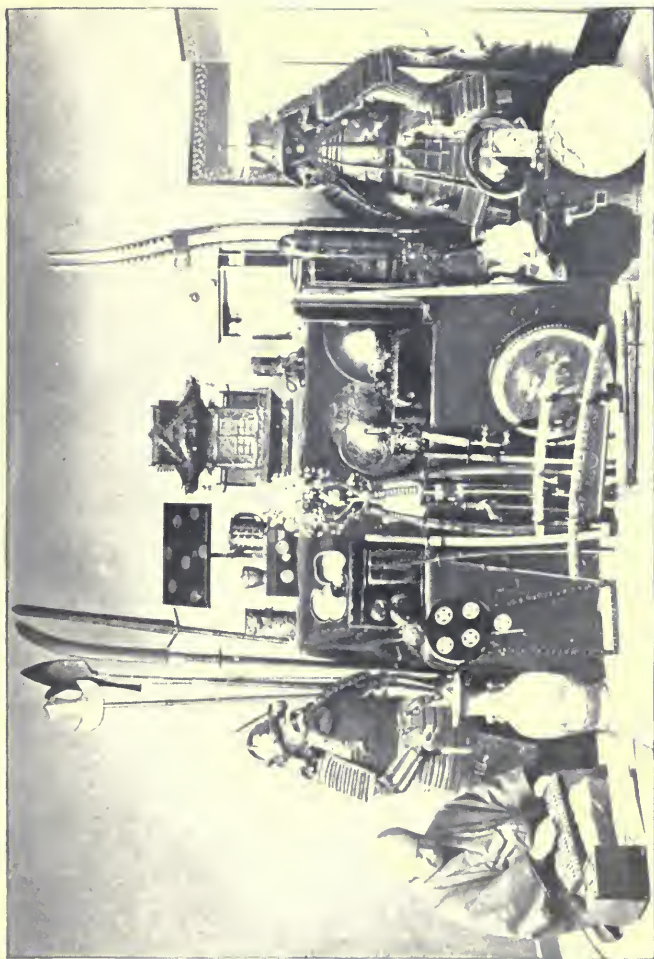


Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

IN A CURIO SHOP.

in the way of passers-by; my face was completely hidden by the strawberry-pottle kind of hat that rōnins affect, save when they prefer the clothes-basket shape. I was altogether an object to inspire peaceable people with a desire to give me a clear space and the politest salutations, especially when they might suspect (which was often the case) that I had added to the habitually violent instincts of the rōnin by the excitement of saké or rice-brandy.

So I passed unharmed, making all haste to get out of the Tokugawa territory before my flight should be discovered, or at least before *I* should be identified with the rōnin I personated.

I succeeded; and when in the territory of another chieftain not over friendly to the Shogun's power, I was comparatively safe. At each town I stopped at after leaving the Shogun's territory I enquired concerning the

prisoners confined there, but never heard of any answering to the description of Darémo.

Three long years were to pass, Nelly, before I should hear; and the brave and good Darémo was to endure torture and all the horrors of close imprisonment in a jail dungeon till madness was added to his sufferings, and in his agony he tried to kill himself—but all through never swerving from his faith for an instant—ere his release came. A glorious imprisonment, in which the prisoner became preacher to the criminals around him, and made their lives bright with the new light and life which sustained his own!

But this I could not anticipate, or my heart, heavy as it was already, would have sunk within me. Rather, I hoped that he might simply have been banished, possibly to his own province, and that we might meet there.

Reaching the Satsuma court, I found

a hearty welcome from the sagacious ruler of that great clan, one among the foremost in numbers, power, intelligence and bravery, and of which it has been said, that "if Japan weighs a hundred, Satsuma is worth fifty of it." Here a new life and new ideas surrounded me. Here foreigners were neither blindly despised nor blindly hated. On the contrary, our ruler, the younger Shimadzu, following his brother's example, had for some years, in defiance of the Shogun's edicts, permitted and encouraged young men to study the Western learning, and even aided a number of them to go abroad by stealth, in spite of the Government espionage.* This was not because he loved the foreigners who had bombarded his city and impoverished his people by unjust

* The Shogun had been obliged to pardon these students on their return and take some into his employ, as it was absolutely necessary to have some interpreters between the Government and the barbarians.

demands for compensation for injuries which they had brought on themselves, but because he saw that to understand their power was the only chance of resisting it successfully, and keeping Japan from sinking, as so many Asiatic nations had done, under the "protection" of some vigorous European Power. He saw that the time for change was come, and that the policy of shutting in the Japanese and shutting out the foreigner must cease.

And so his scheme of action was in direct opposition to that of the Shogunate, and had already brought about innumerable collisions, amounting almost to civil war, between the proud vassal and his liege lord. Satsuma, an ardent loyalist, who hated his enforced submission to the Shogun, looked forward also, in availing himself of European discoveries, in establishing cannon foundries and powder mills, in buying European arms and studying foreign tactics, at once to



Photo :
T. Enami, Japan.

AN ITINERANT PIPE-MAKER.

serving the Mikado and to freeing himself and his fellow tributaries from the heavy yoke of the Tokugawas.

Already—the year before I found at Kioto so tranquil and joyous a life—one of the southern clans had fought the Tokugawas, close to the Mikado's palace, in a battle which raged two days, and caused a conflagration which destroyed thousands of houses, and made homeless half the city, but in which the “Choshu” men were defeated at last by the overwhelming numbers of the Tokugawas. Already the Shogun had been summoned to do homage to his Emperor at Kioto—a sign of inferiority which the Yedo rulers had neglected for two hundred and thirty years—and he had not dared to disobey; already an edict had gone out, commanding the daimios to do homage no longer to the Shogun, but to their supreme ruler, and releasing them from their attendance at the Shogun's court, and, “like wild birds from an open cage, they,

with all their retainers, fled from the city in less than a week."

When I reached Satsuma, near the close of 1867, the great clan-leaders had determined to put an end to the Shogun's usurpation by force, if he would not resign peaceably. The Tokugawas, 80,000 strong, and with powerful friends at court, resisted, by force and intrigue, with all their power the threatened downfall of their glory; but the tide had turned, and their rivals were everywhere victorious. Our present Emperor, Mutsuhito, then about sixteen, had just ascended the throne, and had reigned but a few months, before the chiefs of the Satsuma and other loyal clans surrounded the palace with their followers, dismissed the Shogun's adherents about the court, and induced the Mikado to issue a decree abolishing the Shogunate, and declaring that he would henceforth govern his empire himself, through a council of ministers. This was in

January, 1868. Thus, when I was taken into Shimadzu's service, it was at a time when military training, in preparation for the blow he had decided on striking, was the chief thought and occupation of all. And my heart leaped with joy at the idea of being at last near the fulfilment of my destiny—that of fighting, perchance dying, for the restoration of our Emperor to his ancient greatness.

My fellow soldiers fought with foreign rifles and artillery, and had cast away the sword, spear, bow, and armour on which their rivals still relied. And they had reason, for since adopting European weapons and tactics, success had followed them, in spite of their great inferiority in numbers.

I was one of those who, trained in the old way, had no time to learn skill in the new, before the final struggle of the Shogun to recover his power began. So, as a two-sworded samurai, helmeted, and armour-clad, with a medal of Buddha

fixed in my helmet, I went forth with the Satsuma troops in December, and once again saw fair Kioto: not this time idling in palace gardens, but on guard beside the palace gates, or fighting without its walls. But joy came to me, which it is sweet to think of still. One of my loyalist ballads became the rage, and as it flew from mouth to mouth, it was said that the boy-soldier's song warmed the heart and nerved the arm of many a brave samurai fighting for the freedom of his clan and the honour of his Emperor.

Soon came the decisive battle fought near Kioto. The Shogun, who, after vacillations, had rebelled against the Emperor's decree, lost the battle after three days of desperate fighting and in spite of his overwhelming superiority in numbers. But his prestige was gone; and the enthusiasm of his men was lessened from the moment he appeared openly in rebellion to the Mikado. Then,



Photo :
T. Enami, Japan.

too, our army had the advantage of being recruited from the peasantry (another innovation), who were well paid and full of zeal and confidence in their leaders and their modern weapons.

The Shogun himself, weak but well-meaning, began to be horrified at the thought of continuing in rebellion to the Sacred Majesty, and "awakening the Dragon-wrath." Within a few months he gave in his submission and retired into private life, but not before one of his ministers, unable to see his master and his clan thus disgraced, had solemnly performed hara-kiri, after in vain exhorting the Shogun to do the same.

"Hara-kiri! what an odd word!" you will perhaps say, Nelly. I have used it before, and will now explain what it means.

I have already said that our people had a high sense of honour and personal dignity—that is, those who were permitted to have it. It would have been a tiresome

and punishable impertinence if a plebeian had resented being struck when a samurai felt inclined to strike him, so he and his class had to content themselves with striving after the fit and becoming in daily life, and might not presume to have the fine feelings of a Japanese gentleman. But the gentleman was trained from his childhood—yes, almost from his infancy—in accordance with ancient feudal custom, to be ready to perform *hara-kiri*—that is, to kill himself with two strokes of the short sword across the body—at any moment when honour should demand it. Seldom, indeed, did one who was resolved on *hara-kiri* need to strike twice; so accurate and so unflinching were the strokes that death followed almost instantly.

Many would perform *hara-kiri* rather than live under an unavenged insult. In old days defeated chieftains and their retainers often scored their faces beyond recognition, and then fell on their swords rather than be known by the enemy and

slain by his hand. Sometimes, shut up in a beleaguered fortress when resistance had done its utmost, and the gates were stormed, a chief and his retainers would find even the women refuse to survive their husbands' defeat; and these stoical heroes would kill the women offering themselves to death, and then perform hara-kiri, thus dying unconquered, and so undisgraced. Sometimes, too, loyal retainers insisted on following a dying master to the "happy land" that he might not be unattended there. Finally, if a noble was convicted of crime, or for any reason condemned to die, he was permitted, instead of being killed by the executioner, to perform hara-kiri.

The feeling in each case was, that the insult or disgrace *could not be wiped out except by the insulted person's refusing to live after it.*

I may add that the boys of the samurai caste were trained in other ways

to endurance of hardship and pain, and to feats of strength and skill; and that their courage also was carefully stimulated by stories of brave warriors and their patriotic and chivalrous exploits, which were held out to them for emulation, and which taught them to despise pain and death, and welcome danger and battle.

But suicide is still too common in other ways and among other classes with us. Something in our character, and something in the teaching of Buddhism, makes us care little for life; and we are only just beginning to learn that it is a sin and a dishonour to the Giver of it to cast it away because it is burdened by pain, poverty, mortification or sorrow.

The fact that our Shogun *refused* to perform hara-kiri shows that our feelings had begun to change, for he lives not in disgrace, but in honour and respect to this day. Hara-kiri, like duelling among Europeans, is a relic of feudal times. As they pass away our feelings will change,



A JAPANESE PAINTING.

and we shall measure honour and dishonour by a higher standard.

So ended the system of dual or double government which had lasted nearly seven hundred years, out of which period of time the virtual rulers of our country had been supplied by one clan for two hundred and sixty-four years. And so began a new life in "New Japan."

CHAPTER VIII.

“RING OUT THE OLD, RING IN THE NEW.”

THE new life began quickly for me.

Years older in feeling than before my first campaign, I left the army as soon as Yedo was taken by our troops; and as soon as a slight wound was healed by the usual means—time and paper bandages—I sought and obtained permission to go to America to study Western learning, influenced by a friend who had lately returned thence *as a Christian*.

On his return, full of the Western knowledge, and of that other and better knowledge of the soul, my friend could not keep silence to his countrymen on the glad tidings that had made his life new. He spoke to us of all that he had found, and Japan must find, if

she would be renewed and purified. His knowledge made him valuable, and the Government left him unmolested, although it still professed not to tolerate Christians, and in the following year bitterly persecuted for a time three thousand peasants, Roman Catholic by descent, who were unearthed in a village near Nagasaki, dispersing and banishing them under pretext (whether true or false I know not) that they were disloyal and dangerous to the state.

Later the Protestant Christians, against whom no such pretext was even alleged, were persecuted occasionally with severity. As in my uncle's case, there were from time to time, since the American missionaries had brought the seeds of Christianity in 1859, those upon whom they fell and bore fruit, and who suffered more or less persecution in consequence. Just now there was a lull, and the *bcnt* of our Government

was favourable to the foreigners through whose teachings we had triumphed, both in our appeal to arms and to intelligence. We could not do without them, and many of us were beginning to suspect that progress and Christianity were so connected that we could not make the one without help from the other.

I left my country with feelings I might write about for ever, and not make you understand, Nelly. Curiosity, fear, and repulsion were mixed with admiration, envy, and even liking; for I had by this time seen a few English and Americans, and no longer thought that these names were signs of violent, overbearing, insolent barbarians.

The *missionaries* had helped me to this change.

A few had been permitted to teach English in our schools and to have schools of their own. We had known Christianity first as a name for "the

corrupt and seditious sect," then as a name which powerful but unrighteous and cruel foreigners professed; at last I heard it used as a reason for doing us good, and only good, without hope or expectation of reward, instead of as an excuse for high-handed wrong. I saw it as it is: the religion of gentleness, purity, goodwill; and, so seeing, my heart was drawn to it.

I was "almost persuaded" to be a Christian before I left my country, and when I went among people in Boston and Philadelphia, with whom Christianity was not a name but a deep reality, I wondered how I could have waited so long, and with all my heart and soul I confessed Christ before men. But, Nelly, had I never met better Christians than most of the traders Europe sent to us, I should have lived and died perhaps hating and despising them, and feeling that in doing so I was hating evil, greed, and violence.

There is little more to tell of myself, Nelly. I was away four years studying science and languages, and on my return great happiness awaited me. My uncle had been released, and my sister was married to a samurai, who had been my companion in arms in the revolution, and was now a Christian, and who led Hana's gentle and conscientious spirit into the knowledge of a faith which gave it strength and joy and peace.

How much had happened in my absence! Everyone now talked of "progress" (that is to nations what improvement—getting on—Nelly, is to children), and the chief advisers of the Emperor were bent on introducing that and other Western ideas to their countrymen. "Progress" is a new thought to a Japanese, Nelly. We are proud, and vain too, I am afraid, and we had thought that the golden age lay behind us, and that if only the Mikado's ancient power



HAIR-DRESSING.

Photo T. Enomoto, Japan

were restored we should have done enough. But when we met with foreigners, and found out in how many things their ways were better than ours, we were not so foolish as to let our pride stand in the way of our learning of them, nor so vain as to refuse to *see* where they excelled us. And when we saw it we set our minds to follow in their steps, and, if we could, overtake them. Yes, though our feudal system was still in full strength, and theirs had gradually dropped away, so that they had the start of us by hundreds of years, we determined to strain every nerve to get up to and alongside of them. And with the Mikado at our head, we set about reforming and changing, and casting aside old customs and old prejudices at every step.

It was but four years since I had left. The Emperor had, in the meantime, come from behind the curtain

which had hidden him and his ancestors for seven hundred years; his feet had *touched the earth*, and foreigners had stood upright in his presence.

He had left the beautiful quiet city Kioto, and made his capital in Yedo, as a more fit centre for the active life he was henceforth to lead. Soon after, he was married to *one wife only*, and with her entered Yedo in state for the second time. The name of Yedo was changed to Tokio—that is, “the Eastern Capital.”

He and his ministers sent to Europe and America for foreign teachers in all kinds of arts, manufactures, and learning, and treated them with kindness and respect, and adopted many of their habits.

Missionaries were allowed to have schools in the chief cities, and were often employed in the Government schools, which were being established all over the country. American ladies, too, acting as missionaries, were suffered to

teach our women, and they did untold good among us quietly, they and the American missionaries, before any other missionary could find an opening. For years the latter had been at work, studying our language, and making translations of the Bible and religious works into it, which we might now read freely, and which are now being circulated all over Japan.

The feudal system was *gone*, the daimios had abdicated, and all classes were equal in the eye of the law. These are changes greater than you can well take in, in a few words, Nelly.

At one time every chief had his court and ministers, he received the taxes of his dominion, made laws for it, and was its ruler in every sense, except so far as the Shogun kept him in check by the power of armies and spies.

But now that the Mikado was called to rule over his people directly, as of old,

and that by the enthusiastic wish of these very chiefs, their ministers, and the kugé—they saw that, to make the work complete and successful, they must lay down their authority, disband the little armies that each possessed, and give up all into the hands of the Mikado, that he might rule over a free, prosperous, peaceful, and united country, with equal taxes, laws, and rights for each province. The chief daimios urged the change: the decree went forth, and on October 1st, 1871, daimios surrendered their lordships to the crown, dismissed their retainers, and, daimios no longer, retired to their private estates, pensioned off by Government, or repaired to the court or became governors of their former lordships.

The merchant and the mechanic, the “éta” and the “hinin,” beggars and outcasts, were made citizens and freemen, and marriage was permitted between all classes. The mass of officials were

dismissed, and thus the burdens of the people were lightened. Idle people had been used to ask for some *office* to support them in luxury, with no real work to do, for which they received an income from their feudal lord. This income was derived primarily from the poor peasant, who paid in corn, or millet, or rice, three-fourths of his harvest. So that the taking away of sinecures from the idle, obliged them to work at something that was worth being paid for, and relieved the over-burdened peasant from their support. In one town alone four men were found enough to do the work for which seventy had been kept before this reform took place.

The laws were altered and made less severe, law-schools were established, and prisoners were allowed to have trained lawyers to plead for them. Previously our custom had been very simple and very barbarous. For most offences the penalty was *death*; there was no open

trial, *the prisoner, the torturer, the secretary, and the judge, were all.* Torture is now abolished. This, too, we owe to Western example.

The laws against Christianity were repealed. Protestant and Roman Catholic alike may now work in Japan, if without favour, without fear. I determined—lawyers being much wanted now that a new system of law and new forms of trial were being introduced—to take advantage of the Government offer to young men to study law abroad, and devote myself finally to that. Before again leaving Japan, I saw my Emperor and spoke to him ! It was at the opening of a railroad from Yokohama—close to my native place—to Tokio. A Japanese merchant presented to him an address of welcome, standing upright to do so, the people crowding round. After the ceremony was over, and while the strange steam-monster was snorting to be gone, the national hymn of Japan was played—

a hymn older than history. It seemed to link past and present together in our thoughts.

As I bent before my Emperor, and saw what had been done, and what promise there was of more and more, I remembered my childish dreams, and thanked God that no longer in civil and bloody warfare, nor in songs that pass swiftly away as the wind, but in humble and patient work for him and for my country, for those outcasts whom I had now learnt to know as my fellows, I was henceforth to serve him.

You know all about my being in England, Nelly, so now one more look through my looking-glass, and then good-bye to our Wonderland.

I want to give you in this last look some idea of a few things that will interest you, I think, and that I have waited to tell you about until now, because they have nothing particular to do with my own story.

Most men are shorter, smaller, and less muscular than Europeans. Our complexion varies from the copper-colour of the Japanese to the olive-brown of Italians and Spaniards, but it is not at all the same as the yellow of the Chinese. We have thick black hair and beards—at least we should have if we let them grow. Some do let the hair grow in an unparted mass, but most shave and arrange it carefully, according to custom.

Our reason for shaving the hair from our temples and the front of the head, and gathering all the rest into a top-knot, is because, in the feudal times, it became a custom for warriors to do this, that they might keep the hair out of their eyes when fighting. Gradually the custom spread to all classes. But in more ancient times still our warriors were long-haired, bearded and moustached. The complexions of children are often brilliant and rosy, like those that accompany

dark hair and eyes among yourselves ; while those of ladies of the upper classes, who go out but seldom and guard carefully against sun and wind, are very fine, white, and delicate, but almost colourless. Our people generally have expressive and animated faces, but I cannot pretend that, on the whole, we are anything other than a plain race, although the children, with their smiling, chubby faces, are pretty and engaging, and every one confesses that Japanese girls are very charming in their way.

Two kinds of faces are to be seen among us. We think them very unlike, although, no doubt, a stranger would at once recognise either as Japanese. The one is seen chiefly among the wealthy and noble classes, especially the female part of them ; the other is the commoner type all over Japan, although it is not unfrequently found among nobles.

The high-class type of face is long

and oval, with a high and narrow forehead, straight or aquiline nose, slanting, deep-set, almond-shaped eyes, small thin-lipped mouth, and pointed chin—the type of face which, seen sideways, is called “nutcracker” by the irreverent in England. It is a type of which I have seen more than one resemblance in your country. It is more pleasing in women than men. The half-shaved crowns of the men give an appearance of undue length and oddity to their countenances, from which the women’s frizzed-out rolls of abundant lustrous black hair saves them. In fact, our women of this type are really beautiful, and they are, besides, so graceful in their carriage and manners, and so winning, and yet dignified, that even strangers are charmed with them. The voices of all classes are soft, and the manners of all are courteous, and of the higher class very elaborate and stately.

My sister has not the high-caste type

of beauty, but my wife, on the other hand, is a true "court-lady" in looks and demeanour. I don't think I have told you about her. I knew her in the old happy days at Kioto, when she, a charming maid of honour, and I, an enthusiastic samurai, made verses, jested, sang, and acted together, with a harmony that made lookers-on say we were made for one another—a saying which you see has come true. She is like a Kioto belle—pale, with a faint colour in her cheeks, with finely arched eyebrows, straight nose, small white teeth, masses of hair framing her high arched forehead, a graceful, slender figure, delicate hands and feet, gentle manners, and the softest and kindest dark eyes, and the most enchanting smile in the world. So, Nelly, you see you can never tell quite what she is like unless you will come and see for yourself.

It is supposed that the poor food and laborious life of the mass of the people have something to do with their flatter and

coarser features and sallower complexions. They are not unhealthy, but they have little to make them strong and hearty.

It is true we have about ninety different kinds of fish—thirteen or fourteen of them shell-fish—to choose from; we have fourteen kinds of beans, which more nearly supply the place of meat than anything else; we have many vegetables—not so good as yours, however—potatoes, spinach, egg-plant, yams, leeks, and others, and we eat seaweed made into jelly, and many roots whose names you never heard of. We have wheat, buckwheat, rice, and millet. In some parts of our country grapes, bananas, orange-trees, and sugar-cane grow. We all use eggs, pickled radish, and soy. But with all this, I doubt if you would think we have enough, since we have neither milk nor butter.*

* I am speaking of what has been. We are beginning to breed cattle and sheep now, both for milk and food.

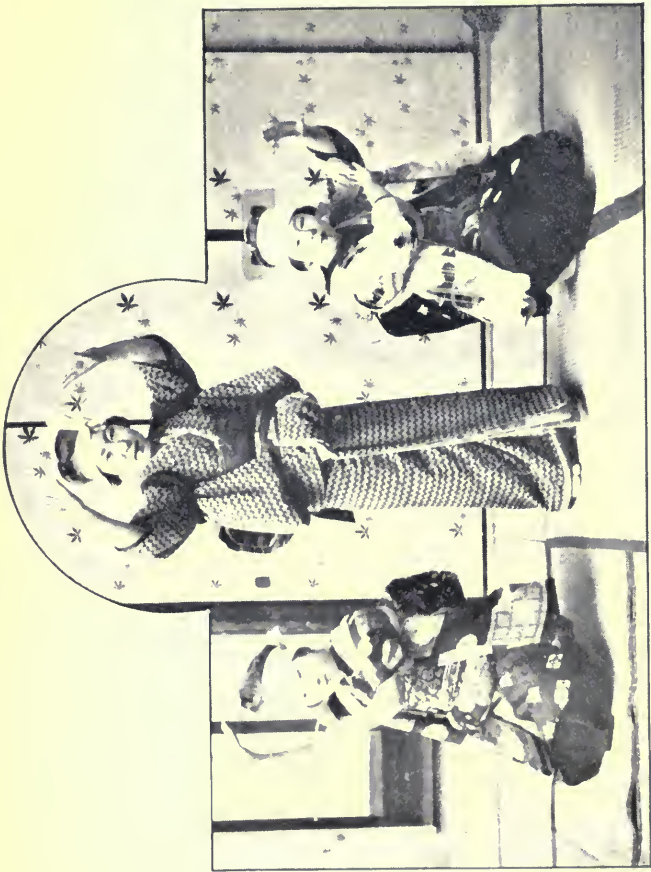


Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

A DANCE TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF
THE "SAMISEN."

A loaf of bread would never cheer your eyes, nor a piece of roast beef, nor a leg of mutton, nor a slice of bacon. Sweetmeats, and sponge-cake, and oranges, those who are not too poor can have in abundance. We have the persimmon, a golden fruit much larger than an apple, and more delicious than any when fresh; and when dried, by hanging from the kitchen roof, tasting something like a fig. But plum pudding, apple pie, gooseberry pudding, a "children's cake," a piece of bread-and-butter, or toast, or cheese, a basin of bread and milk, or a milk-pudding, never; and game, fowls, or ducks, hardly ever. You would feel rather starved on our rations, Nelly. We are not *starved*, but I think it is certain that our food is too poor and too little varied.

"What! with all those kinds of fish?" you may perhaps say.

Yes; fish is only *fish*, even if it be

a piece of whale-steak, which sometimes comes to our tables after a whale has been unfortunate enough to visit our north-eastern shores. And our ways of preparing food do not, except in soups, make it as nourishing as it might be. We eat our salmon (when we get it) dried and salted; we take a kind of vinegar made from rice with most things; we never heard of beef-tea or meat-soup. In the high forest lands, where the wild boar and deer are to be found, or in the marshy lands and rice valleys which wild ducks and geese frequent, each of these are hunted and eaten. Sometimes, too, stews are made of quail, woodcock, and pheasant by the wives of the tired sportsmen who have snared them; and in the mountains, where monkeys are plentiful, they are trapped and killed and roasted, and are considered a great delicacy; so, by the bye, are sea-slugs, and many other things you would shudder at,

even to a kind of whitish clay, which the poor Ainos make, with boiled lily-bulbs, into soup.

We do not take such pains to have our food hot as you do. Even in the depth of winter, you will see a porter taking for his breakfast a mass of cold rice, just warmed by pouring tea over it. We use, as I told you, chopsticks and spoons, for the most part, at meals. The daughter of the house, or the maid, generally dispenses the food, ladling out the rice from a bucket into little bowls, pouring out the tea, and waiting upon all.

As to wine and beer, we have nothing Europeans would call by those names. Saké, the universal alcoholic drink, made from fermented rice, has been in use amongst us from time immemorial—some say for 2,600 years. The saké-sellers and makers hang as a sign a “bush”—a bundle of pine-wood—before the door, as innkeepers did in England in olden times,

whence the proverb "Good wine needs no bush" arose. Saké is not nearly so strong as your intoxicating drinks, and as it is taken in small bowls, which are nothing to your tumblers, it does not work so much harm among us as alcohol does among you. But still we take far too much of it; and drunkenness is too common, especially among the Ainos, who know of no better happiness than getting drunk in honour of the gods. Warmed saké is usually handed to evening visitors on leaving, in small cups with figures of the gods of good luck at the bottom. When warmed it easily flies to the head. Of course children are seldom given saké to drink; and, as with you, it is thought a great disgrace for a woman to take it to excess. We are too readily adopting your beer, wine, and brandy, and even your abuse of them; but these are not yet, and I trust will never come to be, reckoned among our national beverages.



Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

"GEISHIA" WRITING A LETTER.

Just as you would never give a little child saké to drink, so wise parents never take their little girls to our theatres. Yet these are so important a part of Japanese life that I must tell you something about them. The best and most serious among us do not care to attend the theatres, nor is it the custom for persons of high rank to do so. They attend or join in the private performances given within the palace. Sometimes juggling and acrobatic performances are given, sometimes plays on legends of heroic or feudal times or on real events. These are very interesting to us as giving a faithful representation of the good old times, with all their dignity and splendour of ceremonial and dress, and as reminding us of the patriotism and great-heartedness of our ancestors. The scenery and dresses for these are most elaborate and even magnificent; the latter are often almost priceless, being heirlooms handed down from one generation of actors to

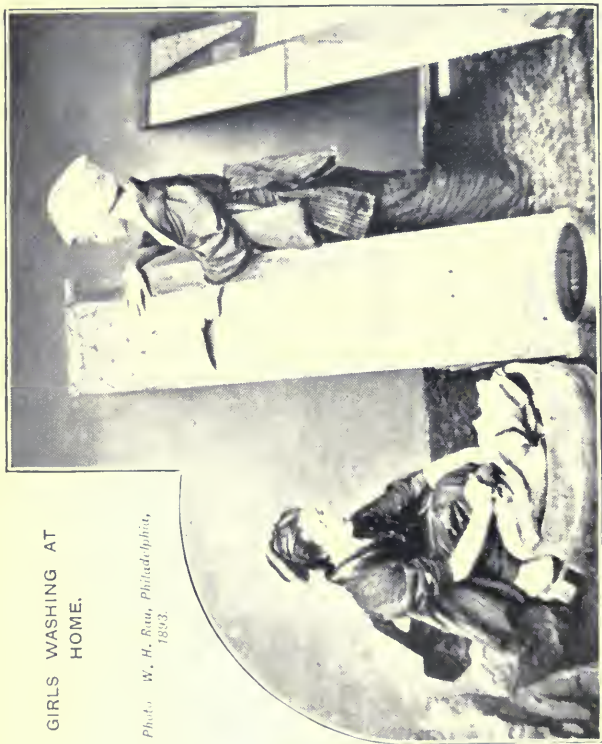
another. The actors were once a despised class, and reckoned among the *éta*, or outcasts. They learned the art from their fathers, and passed on its traditions to their sons.

Then, again, masques and pageants are given—such as scenes from the old court life, or celebrations of the changing seasons. These are beautiful and instructive, but the tragedies and ordinary plays are neither; and a sentence you often hear in England is equally true of Japan, that “the stage needs reforming.” Some of our best actors are trying to do this.

Women were not allowed to act in public except in one or two companies composed of women only. Men act the women’s parts cleverly enough, but their imitation of women’s voices sounds laughable to strangers. Our acting, as a whole, can hardly be done justice to by foreigners, any more than our music. It is too violent; and as for our music, it is

GIRLS WASHING AT
HOME.

Photo. W. H. Rau, Philadelphia,
1893.



almost hopeless for us to try to like yours, or you ours. Each tries to find a meaning and beauty in the other's "harmony," and can find neither.

The play begins about nine or ten in the morning, and lasts all day; sometimes two or three days! Generally it leaves off at dark. When a favourite play is announced, people come early to get good seats—on the floor, of course. Mothers bring their babies, and their husbands the provisions in the dinner-box; and they spend the whole day at the theatre, smoking all the time, chatting, and eating when the actors rest. Tea-house servants bring in trays and offer refreshments. Black-capped boys (whom you are supposed not to see) wait on the actors' movements, slipping behind them and taking away the stage furnishings that are done with, or placing supports, unobserved, for a weary actor, so that he may keep his position the due length of time.

If the performance goes on after dark, candles are lit in front of the stage, and, in addition, attendants hold wands with candles at the end of them, so that the light falls on the actors' faces. Next day, if the play is unfinished, the crowds come again and listen unweariedly, and often breathless and silent with excitement, to the long-drawn-out agonies, raptures, and suspenses of a Japanese play. I was passionately fond of attending, as a child, one of the theatres in Saruwaka Street, in Yedo, so named after the man who first opened a theatre there about A.D. 1620.

The masked dances and pageants especially delighted me, coming down, as they do, from very ancient times, when they were associated with religious meanings, like the old miracle plays among yourselves. Those described in "Kenilworth" have some resemblance to ours. Our stage is now about equal to what your English stage was in

Shakespeare's time. Our juggling and conjuring we think superior to most of yours.

You may want to know what our women do besides keep house. Well, as I have already told you, they work in the fields as hard as the men, and there is scarcely anything that they can do, from leading pack-horses to swimming and diving for shell-fish among the rocks, that they are not employed in. They spin and weave, after they have combed out the fluffy heaps of cotton; they take their part in picking, drying, and sorting the tea-crop; they act as barbers and hairdressers to their own sex, building up erections of false and real hair, with ribbons and pins, which last a week untouched, and because Japanese custom requires the eyebrows to be plucked out after marriage, and any stray hair on the neck and temples to be extracted.

They work at the mechanical part

of various arts, such as fan-making, lacquer-box making, the polishing of mirrors, and so on ; but as in Europe, so with us, they have not been allowed to compete with men in the more skilled labours. The fans are not painted, but put together by them, and even a painter of mere signs, as you see on the adjoining page, would disdain to teach his art to a woman. On the other hand, in music they may take an equal share ; in fact, it is really more practised by women than men. They are more commonly to be seen than men in the shops of some of our large cities, such as Yedo, with the ready-reckoner for ever between their fingers, managing and serving. Wherever there is a "local manufacture," the women take part in it. The peasants' wives go to market to sell and buy, like yours on country fair days, except that, if they have any distance to go, instead of jolting along in a cart, they hang their wares in baskets



Photo : T. Enami, Japan.

SWEET-WINE SELLER.

to the horses' sides, or pile them under the high saddle, which they then mount like men, having never heard of side-saddles.

That is what the poor people do. "Ladies" take a norimono or a kago in such cases, and if they are very great ladies indeed, their norimono is borne by four men, but otherwise by two.

Everywhere, as you have seen, men—and women too, when the men are otherwise employed—are used as beasts of burden in a way that strikes Europeans painfully at first. You will see men on the coldest days in winter, scarcely clothed at all, flying along with the post-bag, or with a live fish, wrapped in straw, slung across their shoulders, which they are bound to deliver in an hour to some epicure who likes his fish fresh from the sea. Then there are the jinrikishas, in which men act as horses, going at six miles an hour, and who suffer much from complaints of

the heart in consequence, and are liable to sudden and early deaths. Then, where other people would perhaps use a ferry-boat among us, many a poor man is glad to get his living by carrying people and packages across the river. Here, again, you can see the difference between the well-to-do lady, who sits at ease on a kind of tray with poles, carried by four men, and the poor woman, who must trust to one man's shoulders for her safety.

It looks hard work, but *we are used to it*. And if we work harder, in the way of carrying burdens, than any Englishman would like to, on the other hand we never have such severe and continuous labour at lifting, digging, and so on, as your navvies, colliers, and draymen.

The fact is, a vast number of us are very poor, yet few but the professional beggars are in such want as thousands of your countrymen, whose



Photo :
T. Enami, Japan.

GIRL WITH LEAF-SPRAY.

whole life is a struggle, often defeated at last, "to keep out of the work-house."

We have very many blind men amongst us, who are, however, usually independent, earning a tolerable living by music, recitation, and (their chief occupation) shampooing—that is, "rubbing" and "kneading" persons over-fatigued or in pain. Their low whistle is heard at nightfall, announcing their presence, and tired travellers send for them, and find themselves rested when the process is over.

I have never told you how I got married. There is nothing special to tell, as I was married by an American missionary with the Christian service.

But I can just say a word or two about the usual marriage service among persons of middle rank. A girl does not receive a marriage-portion from her parents, but they give her presents of clothing, and a housekeeping outfit, as

handsome as they can afford. Sashes, pieces of silk and silk-crape, linen, and so on, and seven sorts of spices for herself; and for housekeeping, two lacquered wooden pillows, lacquer trays, bowls, shelves, workbox, rice-bucket, ladle, and spinning-wheel; braziers and fire-boxes; kitchen utensils; iron kettles, china kettles, teapots, and cups; a few towels, cotton quilts, one or two silken quilts and cushions, and some bamboo switches for brooms. With these, and a few other little things, one or two vases and ornaments, and some matting for the floor, a bride and bridegroom can begin housekeeping in Japan with comfort. If of the poorer classes, fewer and commoner articles will suffice, and their little home can be probably furnished for less than £2 of your money. The bride's parents also send invariably *several barrels of saké* with the other presents for the young couple to begin life with.

The bride, dressed in white silk, and covered from head to foot by a white silk veil, is carried in a *norimono*, about nightfall, to the bridegroom's house, her parents and friends walking beside the litter bearing lanterns.

The groom's party sit on one side of the room, the bride's on the other. It is not necessary to have a priest. Bride and bridegroom are placed in the middle of the room, facing each other. Both keep their eyes fixed on the ground. A low table stands in front of them, with a kettle with two spouts, bottles of saké, and cups, upon it; on another little table are placed images of a fir-tree, a blossoming plum-tree, and a stork standing on a tortoise. The first signifies the strength of the bridegroom; the second, the beauty of the bride; the last, the long life desired for both. Then the tables are set before each person of the company and the marriage-feast begins. The

first part ends with the drinking of three cups of saké by each one.

Then the bride and bridegroom leave the company, but re-appear in a short time in fresh ceremonial dresses, the bride still wearing her veil. Then there is more feasting, and an elaborate course of bowings and drinking of saké in turn by the bride and her new father and mother-in-law; each has taken nine cups before it ends. Lastly, the two-spouted kettle of saké is put to the lips of bride and groom alternately by the two bridesmaids; and with this ceremony, signifying that they are to share together all joys and sorrows in future, the marriage service ends. Up to this point relations only are present, now the wedding guests arrive, and the rest of the evening passes in feasting and drinking. This is part of the prescribed etiquette, ceremonious and silent. Neither bride nor bridegroom will wear any purple



SILK BUTTERFLIES.

on the wedding-day, as its tendency to fade quickly would make it a most unlucky omen.

The wife preserves her veil carefully in the household chest; when she dies it will be her shroud. Girls are married usually before they are twenty—about seventeen or eighteen. The young wife is taken home to her husband's parents if he cannot afford to set up house-keeping separately. She is bound to obey her parents-in-law as strictly as her own. If she cannot satisfy both, she must rather neglect her own parents than his; she must wait upon them and her husband. Every woman must "think her husband to be in heaven"; so she must not, by resisting him, "incur the punishment of heaven."

I dare not give any more rules for the passive obedience of our wives, Nelly, you would be so angry! Nevertheless, in practice, Japanese women have more liberty and more respect paid to

them than those of any other Eastern nation.

I ought to say that among the lower classes women age very quickly, in consequence of the hard work they, like their husbands, spend their life in. Many an Englishwoman I have seen at fifty less withered and worn than a young Japanese women of two or three-and-twenty. Unmarried girls are known by the "red petticoat," a difference in the way of hair-dressing, and the white teeth and unshaved eyebrows.

The profession of fortune-telling is sometimes selected by women. The divining-woman is consulted by all classes. She professes to be a medium, and says that the spirits she is in communication with speak through her voice when suitably summoned. I wish I had time to tell you more about our superstitions. I told a little in reference to myself, but not a hundredth part of

what I could say. Every one wears charms and amulets. When the small-pox rages, anxious parents write outside their houses that their children are away from home, and fancy that the spirit which brings the disease will be cheated by seeing the inscription!

We carry tiny figures of our favourite god or goddess in little embroidered scarlet bags, made on purpose, within our sleeves or girdles, and think that to let one drop by accident is a certain sign of speedy death. But the number of omens we believe in is endless.

Thus we are only too ready to take a professed "medium" at her word, and we call her in to know if a sick person will recover, if a traveller will return safely, if we shall be happily married, if our enterprises will turn out prosperously—anything and everything. The same superstition leads some of us to try to please the gods, or rather to escape their displeasure, by retiring from the

world and living a life of inactive contemplation. This is dying out, as the power of Buddhism dies away. Shintoism has never had life enough in it to inspire such sacrifices, but sometimes, here and there, you may find a true ascetic—a hermit—perched, like the baby of the nursery rhyme, in the tree-top, living by the charity and reverence of passers-by, who hoist his food to the holy man, and thankfully receive his blessing in return, as heavenly payment for an earthly gift.

One word more, about our measurement of times and seasons, and then you will have taken your last look at Old Japan. Till near the end of the sixteenth century we used a kind of water-clock (*clepsydra*). Then timekeepers after the European fashion were introduced by way of China. They were clumsy, and served as clocks, not watches. Now we are adopting the American clocks and watches by hundreds and thousands.

We used the lunar calendar until lately ; we are now exchanging it for the solar calendar used by all Western nations. Our astronomy was borrowed from the Chinese. It is very imperfect, and mixed up with our curious mythology, but I suppose our common people know about as much or as little as yours on that subject ; that is, they can look through a telescope and wonder, but for the rest live in contented and dogmatic ignorance of all that the stargazers pretend to have found out, and say, as I have heard your English peasants say contemptuously, “ How can they tell ? ”

So much for the good old times of Japan, Nelly. The little I have to tell before I close is about the good time come and coming. We cannot foretell our future. It may be that we shall keep many of our old ways and customs, but I myself think we shall find them incompatible with Western knowledge and science and the

practice of Western industries. But in proportion as we drop our old civilisation we shall cease to be "The Eastern Wonderland," and little English children will need no magic looking-glass to see us by.

When I returned, in 1878, a great rebellion had broken out and been finally quelled, though headed by some of the noblest reformers of 1868, and chiefly those of the Satsuma clan. What do you think it was for?

They thought we were *going too far*. They wanted foreigners shut out as soon as we had learnt what we needed of them; they regretted the downfall of the military class; in fact, they wanted to go backwards. But now we had trains, telegraphs, and a strong national army formed of all classes; and the national Government had quickly subdued these misguided patriots, who fought with the ancient weapons, sword and spear, clothed in armour, and with

the ancient (and still present) bravery, and who, when defeated, performed "hara-kiri" by hundreds in sign of their sorrow for their country's degradation. When peace was restored, the great fortresses were dismantled and their towers thrown down, and now you could walk upon the walls of our castle at Tokio where twenty years ago the archers watched by day and night, and the guards challenged at the gate, and the braves swaggered about the postern. Many a samurai regrets those times, but *the people* rejoice, and they have reason.

Another decree had gone forth in my second absence. The caste privilege of the samurai was to be abolished. *The two swords were to be laid aside.* It was done; and so I shall end my life as I began it—swordless and casteless.

If you pass along our streets you will see many houses, which had been

destroyed by fire some years ago, rebuilt in European fashion. You will also see our soldiers clothed in European regimentals, and perhaps our Emperor going through the city to dine with our mayor, riding in European military dress, his hair and beard grown, his appearance Europeanised. The banquet, too, will probably be more like yours than like our ancient ones of twenty years ago; and if chopsticks are used, so will knives and forks be; chairs will be provided, and the guests will be seated at a high table.

The Empress may be seen in her carriage with eyebrows unshaved and teeth unblackened. Jinrikishas—perambulators with shafts, mounted on high wheels, and drawn by *men*, who go at the rate of six miles an hour—will be flying along the streets. This half-English, half-Japanese invention of a dozen years ago is now the rage, and no one who can go in a jinrikisha will

go in a *norimono* or a *kago*. Horse-carriages are commonly seen.

Many of the temples are shut up, and their income devoted to education; their gardens are being built over. Hospitals are to be seen, attended by native doctors, who have been trained in Europe or under Europeans.

No proud daimio's procession strikes terror into every passer-by lest he should not hurry quickly enough out of the way; and no prostrate merchants and peasants line the road with heads in the dust, till some high mounted samurai has ridden past. No wretched criminal, guilty of some small theft for want of bread, is hurried to the court of justice where the torturer awaits him.

Many of the men have ceased to shave the head and wear the top-knot. Some of the women think they improve themselves by copying Parisian fashions.

The school-children learn from foreign text-books, translated into Japanese;

and their reading-books are either translations of foreign works, or modern books written for them by our scholars. Our native literature is studied, but not used as a guide any longer ; our students and schoolmasters are busy creating a new literature for New Japan.

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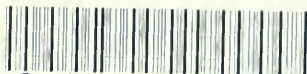
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